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FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING

EASTERN AFFAIRS

PART XLVI

JANUARY TO DECEMBER 1940

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Further Correspondence respecting Eastern Affairs.

PART XLVI.—JANUARY TO DECEMBER 1940.

CHAPTER I. ARABIA.

E 126/112/65] No. 1

Mr Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received January 9.)

(No. 8.)
(Telegraphic.) *Jedda, January 9, 1940*

AMIR FAISEL asked me to call this morning and, on Ibn Saud's instructions, gave me the following information:—

2. The Italian Minister has informed His Highness that Signor Mussolini had been approached by Herr Hitler with request that Italian Government should ask Ibn Saud to allow Dr Grobba to visit Jedda.

3. The Italian Minister had also, on instructions, raised the question of diplomatic representation. Ibn Saud was represented in London and Rome in Paris, and Italy felt neglected.

4. As regard Dr. Grobba, Viceroy had, he told me, replied that this was a matter which Ibn Saud must himself decide, and that he would consult him on his arrival in Mecca [illegible] time. He [illegible] given that [illegible] order to [illegible] King [illegible] not wish to take action [illegible] His Majesty's Government. King's view was that he did not want Dr Grobba here, he feared that if he permitted him to come, the idea might gain currency that he was modifying his attitude, which, whilst one of neutrality, was known to be benevolent to the Allies. [illegible] I would [illegible] recognise that it would be invidious for Ibn Saud to refuse to allow visit of a duly accredited representative of a Power with whom he was at least theoretically on friendly relations. Ibn Saud suspected that as Dr Grobba could have no conceivable matter to discuss, the request was a put up job on the part of Italy and Germany to embarrass him and place him in the eyes of the world in a false position.

5. As regards appointment of a Saudi Arabian Minister to Italy, Viceroy [illegible] glad to say [illegible] of this arrangement would receive due consideration. Viceroy stated for my information, that King's view was that, so long as His Majesty's Government saw no objection and while Italy was not involved in the war, he saw no harm in appointment. If Italy joined Germany, means could be found to remove representative.

6. I replied, as regards Dr Grobba, that, whilst he would appreciate that I could not give a final opinion without reference, I felt convinced that His Majesty's Government would wish not to embarrass His Majesty. They would, I felt sure, fully appreciate the delicate situation in which Signor Mussolini's demarche had placed Ibn Saud. From Russian [illegible] I felt that the King's attitude since the war had been most fully appreciated, and I did not think it possible that His Majesty's Government could interpret his permission to Dr. Grobba to visit Hejaz, if he felt obliged to give it, as a change of attitude towards us. I [illegible] why His Majesty's Government might prefer not

to see Dr Grobba here would, I thought, be that he was a born intriguer and might try to stir up trouble, but strong line which Ibn Saud had always adopted in matter of propaganda was well known, and we could safely leave this aspect in Ibn Saud's care

7 Viceroy begged for a very urgent indication of your views, both as regards Dr Grobba's visit and Saudi Arabian representation in Rome. I promised to telegraph urgently and request urgent reply

8. If I may venture an opinion, after so short an experience here, it is that I be authorised to inform Ibn Saud that His Majesty's Government fully appreciates this further proof of his desire for closest co-operation, but do not feel justified in his interests, in urging him to refuse request for Dr Grobba's visit, nor do they see any objection in existing circumstances to appointment of representative at Rome

9. Ibn Saud particularly asked that a definite expression of opinion be given, and that he should not be told that His Majesty's Government leaves the matter to his own good sense

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 2 (please repeat to Middle East Intelligence Centre Bagdad, No. 3; and Jerusalem, No. 3.)

E 151 112 65] No 2

Sir B Newton to Viscount Halifax (Received January 11)

(No 4)
(Telegraphic) *Bagdad, January* 11 1940

[MIDDA telegram No 8

The purpose of Dr Grobba's visit is certainly to make trouble for us throughout the Arab world and probably also to create difficulties between Iraq and Saudi Arabia. For such a mission he is of course exceptionally well qualified. Information available to you concerning activities of Shakib Arslan suggests also that Germany may be maturing plans for extensive nationalist risings in Palestine and Syria, coupled with tribal insurrection of the Lower Euphrates in Iraq, and that ambitions of Ibn Saud or his family are to be exploited if possible in order to add to our embarrassment

In any case the mere fact of Dr Grobba's arrival in Saudi Arabia would give rise to a host of disturbing rumours which would be used by German propaganda I would urge therefore that everything possible should be done to persuade Ibn Saud to find means of preventing a visit which would probably lead to Dr Grobba's permanent establishment in Saudi Arabia. Ibn Saud evidently expects His Majesty's Government to make up his mind for him, and I trust that there need be no hesitation in advising him that a visit from Dr. Grobba would always involve him in grave difficulties

(Repeated to Jedda, No. 2, Cairo, No. 2, Jerusalem, No. 4.)

E 178 112 65] No. 3

Mr Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax—(Received January 12)

(No. 10)
(Telegraphic) *Jedda, January* 12 1940

MY telegram No. 8

Following from Mr de Gaury.—

German Minister

"Ibn Saud in a torrent of talk this morning, 10th January, made the following points:—

"(a) He has no illusion about the trouble to him [Ibn Saud] and to us if he [German Minister] comes

"(b) That he particularly hoped that His Majesty's Government would offer him definite counsel

"(c) That he is prepared for His Majesty's Government to suggest to him declaration of state of siege

"(d) Calming down, he made it clear that (c) above depended upon satisfaction of his 'interest,' by which he meant economic and other advantages

"(e) This, he thought, could conveniently take the shape merely of a note and not that of a formal instrument to be published abroad

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 4 Bagdad, No. 5 and Jerusalem, No. 5.)

E 3 3 25] No. 4

Ibn Saud's Claim to Akaba and Maan

[An explanatory map is attached, for other maps which may be useful in this connexion, see page 18 of the *Report of the Royal Commission on Palestine* (1937 Cmd 5479), and the map attached to the Foreign Office memorandum entitled "The Frontiers between Transjordan and Nejd and Transjordan and the Hejaz" (C'd 15789)]

(Secret.)

AMONG the territorial questions in dispute, though not in active dispute, between H[illegible] Majesty's Government and the Saudi Arabian Government, is a claim by Ibn Saud, which he has inherited from King Hussein of the Hejaz, to the districts of Akaba and Maan in what is now Transjordan

2 In considering this claim from the legal aspect there are two main points to be borne in mind —

(1) The historical and administrative position of Akaba and Maan in the Ottoman Empire

(2) The manner in which the question of sovereignty has been affected by conquest, occupation and administration, and by certain measures of Allied and British policy, during and since the War of 1914 18

3 The position as regards (1) can be stated quite briefly In 1886 the Sanjak of Maan (which included Akaba) was transferred from the Ottoman Vilayet of Syria to the Ottoman Vilayet of the Hejaz In 1894 it was restored to the Vilayet of Syria, and remained part of that vilayet until after the outbreak of the Great War In 1915 the Vilayet of Syria was extended southward so as to include portions of the Vilayet of the Hejaz down to Wejh and El Ala, the line between these two points marking the recognised northern limits of the Hejaz in the old sense of the Holy Land of Islam That this line is the boundary of the Holy Land can be confirmed from history and is of importance as providing a [illegible] Maan and Akaba should rightly belong to "the Hejaz," because they are part of the Holy Land In 1916 the Turkish Government, for reasons of wartime expediency, enlarged the Sanjak of Medina so as to include Akaba No other administrative change seems to have been made by them before the conclusion of hostilities. Historically, therefore, Syria would appear to have, if anything, a somewhat stronger claim to Akaba and Maan than has the Hejaz.

4. The position is more difficult as regards (2), since the history of the disputed districts after the revolt of the Shereef of Mecca (afterwards King Hussein of the Hejaz) in 1916 is very complicated In 1917 the Shereef captured Akaba from the Turks, and his troops remained in effective occupation of the place until 1919 Although it appears that the British authorities had at the time no intention of committing themselves as to the future status of Akaba, and indeed considered that it should remain in British hands after the war, it also appears that it was thought impolitic to emphasise to the leader of the Arab revolt at that stage the temporary nature of his own occupation of the town

5 After the armistice the conquered territories were divided by General Sir Edmund Allenby into [illegible] Akaba was not at the time

[illegible] Territory (East)", Maan may or may not have been intended to fall within that area. On the other hand, Sir Edmund Allenby was, in January 1918, given by His Majesty's Government supreme authority as far south as the line Ras Fartak-Tebuk, 100 miles south of Akaba, although King Hussein was not told of this. Later, Sir Edmund Allenby's Headquarters definitely asserted that Akaba had always fallen within "Occupied Enemy Territory (East)," and claimed that "no civil or military appointments there could be recognised unless made by Damascus(¹) with the Commander-in-chief's approval."

6. But even Sir Edmund Allenby's claim that he was responsible for Akaba and Maan was not apparently meant to prejudice their future status, for Colonel C. E. Wilson, the British agent at Jedda, was instructed by His Majesty's High Commissioner at Cairo in January 1919, to explain the position as regards appointments at Akaba to King Hussein, and in so doing to "point out that the King's renunciation will be short lived, since Akaba must very soon cease to be a military base and return to a small village."

7. In November and December 1919 His Majesty's Government, as a matter of high policy, withdrew British troops and control from the southern or "B" Area of "Occupied Enemy Territory (East)," leaving it entirely to the Arab administration at Damascus. The British withdrawal seems to have terminated any exercise of British authority in Akaba.

8. In August 1920, however, His Majesty's Government adopted a plan for the reoccupation of the territory east of the Jordan with the consent of the inhabitants, and a number of British political officers went there at the invitation of various Transjordan notables who invoked British help in organising a local government. The question arises whether this invitation could be held to include a return to Maan and Akaba and to the position His Majesty's Government had asserted there in 1919. It is difficult to contend that the invitation had this effect, in view of the fact that both Akaba and Maan were at that time under Hejaz administration.

9. But, whatever the theoretical position may have been, it is interesting to note that when, after the reoccupation of Transjordan, the attitude of His Majesty's Government gradually crystallised into a determination that Maan and Akaba should be retained for Transjordan, which at about this time came under the rule of the Amir Abdullah, one of King Hussein's sons, this object was always envisaged as being achieved with the consent of, and by agreement with, the Hejaz authorities. The question of Maan and Akaba was thus, in fact, left over after the war for friendly arrangement with King Hussein, although it was certainly the intention of His Majesty's Government to induce him to give way to them.

10. King Hussein's obstinate attitude, however, made a friendly arrangement impossible. For instance, the policy of His Majesty's Government found expression in the instructions issued to Lieutenant Colonel S. C. Knox, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, before the Koweit Conference in December 1923, that he should attempt to obtain the acceptance by both King Hussein and Ibn Saud of the proposal that the Transjordan Hejaz boundary should run westwards from the point of intersection of meridian 38° east with parallel 29° 35' north to a point on the Hejaz Railway in the neighbourhood of Mudawara, and thence to a point on the Gulf of Akaba south of Akaba town. This attempt to reach agreement failed, however, owing to King Hussein's refusal to send a delegate to the conference.

11. The situation changed completely with the advance of Ibn Saud against the Hejaz in 1924 and the collapse of Hejaz authority in the area in question. Hitherto the question of Maan and Akaba had been one for friendly negotiation with King Hussein. Indeed, there was, even as late as October 1924, a distinct possibility that Akaba town itself might be left to the Hejaz. But the advance of Ibn Saud put an end to this policy of patience and it became necessary to [illegible] Wahabi troops. The strategic frontier required for this purpose had to include both Maan and Akaba.

(¹) Where an Arab administration under the Amir Feisal had been set up. Although he was King Hussein's son, his acceptance did not mean that the peoples of Damascus and the other liberated Arab territories considered themselves in any way under King Hussein's authority.

12. A message from His Majesty's Government was therefore conveyed to Ibn Saud by the Political Agent at Bahrein in a letter dated the 21st October, 1924, to the effect that His Majesty's Government would regard unprovoked aggression beyond a line running from the point of intersection of meridian 38° east with parallel 29° 35' north to a point on the Hejaz Railway 2 miles south of Mudawara, and thence to a point on the Gulf of Akaba 2 miles south of Akaba town, as an attack upon territory for which they were responsible.

13. In May 1925 it was reported that Ibn Saud was contemplating the despatch of a force against Akaba, and a further message was sent to him, in which it was declared that His Majesty's Government could not allow Akhwan forces to violate this line, that if such forces attempted to enter Akaba His Majesty's Government would take the necessary steps to eject them, and that His Majesty's Government were taking steps to establish the authority of the Transjordan administration in the whole area comprised within the boundary communicated to Ibn Saud in October 1924. Ibn Saud replied that he had noted the contents of this communication, and called off his troops.

14. In October 1925, on the occasion of the negotiations for the settlement of the frontier between Transjordan and Nejd which culminated in the Hadda Agreement of the 2nd November, 1925 (Cmd. 2566), Ibn Saud was informed of His Majesty's Government's decision that the frontier line between Transjordan and the Hejaz should eventually be drawn in accordance with the declarations referred to in the two preceding paragraphs.

15. When, after the final conquest of the Hejaz by Ibn Saud, it was decided to enter into negotiations with him for a new treaty, it was proposed that a protocol should be attached to the treaty, embodying Ibn Saud's agreement to the Hejaz-Transjordan boundary claimed by His Majesty's Government. Ibn Saud at first presented a counter request for the return to the Hejaz of the Maan-Akaba district. When it was made clear to him that His Majesty's Government had no intention of receding from their attitude in the matter, he withdrew his request, and suggested that the whole matter should be dropped from the negotiations, [illegible] would expose him to severe criticism in the Moslem world for having ceded a portion of the Holy Land of Islam to Great Britain, and that the question should be left over until a more favourable moment. At the same time, he stated his readiness to [illegible] himself secretly not in practice to raise the subject or question the occupation and administration of the district by the officers of His Majesty's Government. Moreover, after further pressure, Ibn Saud eventually proposed [illegible] reluctantly, that he should give a guarantee in writing to respect the *status quo* for the time being. After much discussion, it was agreed that this guarantee should be included in an exchange of notes to be attached to the Treaty of Jedda (Cmd. 2951), which was eventually signed on the 20th May, 1927.

16. In these notes,(*) which were dated the 19th May and 21st May, Sir Gilbert Clayton on behalf of His Majesty's Government, defined the frontier on the lines already indicated in the present memorandum, and Ibn Saud, after stating that he found it impossible in the present circumstances to effect a final settlement of this question, went on to say that nevertheless, out of friendship for His Majesty's Government, he desired to express his willingness to maintain the *status quo* in the Maan-Akaba district and not to interfere in its administration until favourable circumstances would permit a final settlement of the question.

17. But in addition to the published notes, there is also a secret, unpublished note,(*) dated the 21st May, 1927, in which Ibn Saud stated that his request for the postponement of any settlement of this question had not been dictated by any desire on his part to dispute the ownership of the territory in question, but only his fear lest, owing to the activities of his enemies, his acceptance of the frontier proposed by His Majesty's Government might be seized upon as a weapon for hostile criticism against him, and that, when it became necessary to effect the [illegible] to abide by whatever decision they might think just.

18. The question remains up to the present time as defined in these notes, and confirmed, so far as the official notes were concerned, in an exchange of notes(*) (Cmd. 5380) of the 3rd October 1936, modifying the Treaty of Jedda.

(*) See Annex A. (*) See Annex B. (*) See Annex C.

But when the report of the Royal Commission on Palestine was published in July 1937, Ibn Saud made it clear that if as a result of this report Transjordan eventually became independent of British control, he would expect Akaba and Maan to be made over t[illegible] The [illegible] was accordingly exposed of offering Ibn Saud a frontier rectification which, while transferring to Saudi Arabia the town of Akaba and some part of the region to the north and east, would still give Transjordan (as well as Palestine) with direct access to the Gulf of Akaba. It was eventually decided that the retention of the town itself was important strategically for the defence of Tran[illegible] But the reply sent to Ibn Saud on this point and he did not raise it again. His action suggests, however, that he regards the [illegible] of the 21st May 1927, as an assurance to His Majesty's Government only which does not invalidate any claim he may have against Transjordan.

19. In an Eastern Department memorandum of August 1926, the general position is summed up as follows:—

> Transjordan's claim to the ownership of Akaba and Maan as against the claim of King Hussein, was never entirely established. The question was deliberately left over during the war for negotiations afterwards, and these negotiations never achieved finality. But we have never in any way admitted to Ibn Saud that he, as successor by conquest to the Kingdom of the Hejaz, was entitled to include Akaba and Maan in his kingdom. On the contrary, in all our dealings with Ibn Saud, we have adopted the consistent attitude that the boundary between the Hejaz and Transjordan runs south of Akaba and Mudawara. Ibn Saud has never categorically agreed to this boundary, but he has [illegible] this disputed area is not historically part of the Holy Land of Islam, and any claims which King Hussein may have [illegible] and due to his occupation of the district as our ally during the Great War. Whatever obligations we may, therefore, have been under to King Hussein, have been liquidated by the fall of his dynasty."

20. The problem probably presents itself to Ibn Saud in a somewhat different light. He probably feels that being at war with King Hussein he was entitled to take possession of all King Hussein's territory if he could, and that he undoubtedly could and would have occupied that part of King Hussein's territory represented by Akaba and Maan had not a third party, who had not been able to assert his claim to those places as against King Hussein, or had at any rate not seen fit to do so, suddenly stepped in and occupied the territory in question himself instead of continuing to pursue the claim as against Ibn Saud by the same diplomatic methods which he had employed in the case of King Hussein. But all the same the argument indicated in the last two sentences of the preceding paragraph appears to be the best reply His Majesty's Government can make to any argument based on the events of 1916-20, which, as has been shown, throw some doubt on the intentions of His Majesty's Government at the time as regards Maan, and even more so as regards Akaba.

21. In conclusion it may be said that Ibn Saud's claim has no merits in itself. Akaba—and still less Maan—are of no value to Saudi Arabia, which has a long coast line and infinite stretches of [illegible]. The two places, and especially Akaba, are of great importance to Transjordan which has no other outlet to the sea.

Eastern Department,
Foreign Office, January 12, 1940.

(*) See Annex D.

Annex A

Texts of Notes Exchanged on the Occasion of the Signature of the Treaty of Jeddah, May 20, 1927 (" Treaty Series No. 25 (1927) " Cmd. 2961)

(1)

Sir G. Clayton to His Majesty the King of the Hejaz, of Nejd and its Dependencies

Your Majesty,

I HAVE the honour to remind your Majesty that, in the course of our negotiations, which have happily resulted in the conclusion of a treaty of friendship and good [illegible] between His Britannic Majesty and your Majesty, [illegible] was discussed, and I explained to Your Majesty [illegible] protocol submitted by me to you, which His Majesty's Government have taken up on this question and to which they must adhere.

His Majesty's Government regard the above-mentioned frontier as being defined as follows:—

> The frontier between the Hejaz and Transjordan starts from the [illegible] of meridian 38° east and parallel 29° 35' north which marks the termination of the frontier between Nejd and Transjordan, and proceeds in a straight line to a point on the Hejaz Railway 2 miles south of Mudawwara. From this point it proceeds in a straight line to a point on the Gulf of Aqaba 2 miles south of the town of Aqaba.

Respects

GILBERT CLAYTON,
His Britannic Majesty's Commissioner and Plenipotentiary

Jedda, May 19, 1927 (*Zul Qa'da* 18, 1345)

(2)

Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul Rahman al Faisal al Saud to His Britannic Majesty's Commissioner and Plenipotentiary

(Translation.)

IN reply to your letter dated the 18th Zul Qa'da, 1345, on the subject of the Hejaz-Transjordan frontier, we note that His Majesty's Government adhere to the [illegible] but we find it impossible, in the present circumstances, to effect a [illegible] Nevertheless [illegible] to express [illegible] your willingness to maintain the *status quo* in the M[illegible] Aqaba district, and we promise not to interfere in its administrat[illegible] circumstances will permit a final settlement of this question.

Respects

(Sealed) ABDUL AZIZ IBN ABDUL RAHMAN al SAUD

Zul Qa'da 19, 1345, (*May* 21, 1927)

Annex B

Abdul Aziz Ibn Abdul Rahman-al-Faisal-al Saud to Sir G Clayton

(Personal and Secret.)
Dear Sir Gilbert Clayton, *Zul Qa'da* 19, 1345 (*May* 21, 1927)

WE [illegible] express to you [illegible] of the treaty of amity and good understanding, and to express the hope that its conclusion will be followed by formal ratification, and will lead to a new era of happy [illegible]

We also consider that we should express our satisfaction at the postponement of the settlement of the Hejaz Transjordan frontier, and to ask you to assure His Majesty's Government on our behalf that our request for the deferment of the settlement was not dictated by any desire on our part to dispute the ownership of the territory in question, but only by our fear lest, owing to the activities of our enemies, our acceptance of the frontier proposed by His Majesty's Government might in the present circumstances be seized upon as a weapon for hostile criticism against us. We further assure His Majesty's Government that, when it becomes necessary to effect the final settlement of this question, they will find us willing to abide by whatever decision they may think just

Lastly, I send you my cordial greetings and my wishes for a pleasant journey

(Sealed) ABDUL-AZIZ IBN ABDUL-RAHMAN-AL-SAU'D

Annex C

Extract from the Exchange of Notes for the Modification of the Treaty of Jedda of May 20, 1927; *October* 3, 1936 ("*Treaty Series No* 10 (1937)"; *Cmd.* 5380)

(1)

(Translation)

The Minister for Foreign Affairs to His Majesty's Minister at Jedda

Your Excellency, *Mecca, Rajab* 17, 1355
(After compliments.) (*October* 3, 1936)

WHEREAS the period of seven years specified in article 8 of the Treaty of Jedda of the 18th Zul Qa'da, 1345, corresponding with the 20th May, 1927,(*) expired on the 8th Jumad ath-Thani, 1353, corresponding with the 17th September, 1934, and under this article the operation of the said treaty may be terminated [illegible] six months' [illegible] given by either party to the other party

Our two Governments have for some time past been in negotiation with the object of placing their reciprocal relations on a more stable basis, and being animated by a common desire to consolidate still further the friendly relations happily existing between them have, as a result of these negotiations, agreed, subject to certain stipulations which have been agreed upon, to modify the conditions in which the said treaty may be terminated, and also to modify certain of the provisions of that treaty and of the letters annexed thereto exchanged between His Majesty King Abdul Aziz and Sir Gilbert Clayton at the time of the conclusion of the treaty. I confirm hereinafter the stipulations agreed upon :—

* * * * * *

4. The Government of His Majesty the King of Saudi Arabia reserve their rights in the Aquba-Ma'an area as set forth in the letter of His Majesty King Abdul Aziz, King of Saudi Arabia, to Sir Gilbert Clayton, dated the 19th Zul Qa'da, 1345, corresponding with the 21st May, 1927, in reply to the letter of Sir Gilbert Clayton of the 18th Zul Qa'da, 1345, corresponding with the 19th May, 1927

(*) Treaty Series No 25 (1927) Cmd 2951

(2)

His Majesty's Minister at Jedda to the Minister for Foreign Affairs

Your Royal Highness,
(After compliments.) *Jedda, October* 3, 1936.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Royal Highness's note of the 17th Rajab, 1355, corresponding with the 3rd October, 1936, in which you [illegible] the treaty of Jedda of the 20th May, 1927, corresponding with the 18th Zul Qa'da, 1345, expired on the 17th September, 1934, corresponding with the 8th Jumad ath-Thani, 1353, and that under the said article the operation of the said treaty may be terminated on six months' notice of such termination being given by either party to the other party. Your Royal Highness refers to the negotiations in which our two Governments have been engaged for some time past, with the object of placing their relations on a more stable basis, and to the fact that, animated by a common desire to consolidate still further the friendly relations happily existing between them, they have, as a result of those negotiations, agreed to modify the conditions under which the said treaty may be terminated, and also certain of the provisions of the said treaty and of the letters exchanged between His Majesty King Abdul Aziz and Sir Gilbert Clayton at the time of the conclusion of the treaty, subject to certain stipulations which have been agreed upon and which are recited in your Royal Highness's note under reference

I have the honour to confirm, on behalf of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, the agreement which has been reached and the stipulations to which it is subject, as follows:—

* * * * * * *

4. His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom take note of the reservation made in paragraph 4 of your Royal Highness's note under reference, with regard to the Aqaba-Ma'an area, as set forth in the letter of His Majesty King Abdul Aziz, King of Saudi Arabia, to Sir Gilbert Clayton, dated the 19th Zul Qa'da, 1345, corresponding with the 21st May, 1927, in reply to Sir Gilbert Clayton's letter of the 19th May, 1927, corresponding with the 18th Zul Qa'da, 1345. My Government, for their part, adhere to the position defined in the said letter of Sir Gilbert Clayton

Annex D

When in September 1922 the status of Transjordan in relation to the mandate for Palestine was under discussion at Geneva, the representative of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom submitted a memorandum on the question (see Cmd. 1785) By this memorandum the council was invited to pass a resolution making certain provisions of the mandate applicable to "the territory known as Transjordan, which comprises all territory lying to the east of a line drawn from a point 2 *miles west of the town of Akaba*, on the gulf of that name, up the centre of the Wady Araba, Dead Sea and River to its junction with the River Yarmuk, thence up the centre of that river to the Syrian frontier" known

2. So far as the strategic aspect is concerned, it seems that the roadstead off the coast between the town of Akaba and the Palestine frontier is as good as, if not better than, the roadstead off the town itself. But if the town did not belong to Transjordan, hostile forces or tribesmen, who would otherwise have no convenient point of concentration, would find it easier than at present to attack or raid South-Eastern Transjordan

E 227 227 25] No. 5

Cypher Telegram from Secretary of State to Political Resident, Koweit, repeated to Minister, Jedda, dated January 13, 1940.—(Communicated by India Office; Received January 14.)

(No 223.)

ADDRESSED Political Resident No. 223; repeated His Majesty Minister, Jedda, No. 1, copy to India by mail, please give copy to political agent

2. Saudi Koweit agreements. Following views on Jedda telegram No. 177 of 27th December have been received from Foreign Office (copy of letter sent to Koweit by air mail on 12th January) —

(a) *Musabala.* In view of great difficulty which this has caused, Foreign Office suggest as possible solution that all reference to it should be omitted, on the ground that it is already open to the sheikh, apart [illegible] the agreement, to let tribesmen from Saudi territory enter Koweit for whatever purpose without obtaining his permission, wh[illegible] on the Saudi side it is similarly open to Ibn Saud to lay down that his tribesmen must not leave Saudi territory without a docu[illegible] issued by Saudi authorities. This solution would involve omission of [illegible] article 9 of trade agreement, (ii) the words "or musabala" of [illegible] "Bon Voisinage" Agreement, and (iii) article 11 (5) of that [illegible] Please consider this suggestion, which would presumably be [illegible] at any rate to the sheikh.

(b) *Enlistment.*—This seems to offer no difficulty. Foreign Office suggest it would be best to omit article 10 of "Bon Voisinage" Agreement entirely

(c) *List of Tribes.*—Suggestion that sheikh might make a list of tribes claimed as his subjects (paragraph 6 of Jedda telegram) might be adopted

(d) *Jurisdiction.*—Insertion of words "or of a third Arab State" in articles 1 and 2 of extradition agreement is approved and should be satisfactory

3. I hope that in consultation with sheikh you will be able to advance matters so as to facilitate reference to Ibn Saud while at Mecca

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E 151 112 65] No. 6

Viscount Halifax to Mr Stonehewer Bird (Jedda)

(No. 2.)

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, January 14, 1940*

Your telegram No. [illegible] of 30th December and Baghdad telegram No. 4 of 11th January. Relations of Ibn Saud with Germany and Italy

In considering this question, it is desirable to distinguish between two quite different possibilities, *i.e.*, a refusal by Ibn Saud to receive

(*a*) Dr Grobba

(*b*) Any German representative at all

2. I was at first inclined to view that, as Dr Grobba is already unfavourably known to Ibn Saud, it would be better, on assumption that some German representative will have to be received sooner or later, for this representative to be Dr. Grobba rather than some other German who might be equally able and more dangerous because less suspect.

3. I am, however, impressed by Sir B. Newton's observations (although it is possibly premature to attach much importance to Shekib Arslan's activities) It is not so much a question of harm Dr Grobba could really do. This might be very small. But the reception of a diplomat with his record would give rise to much misunderstanding. It therefore seems desirable to take advantage of fact that Ibn Saud has, as Sir B Newton says, virtually asked His Majesty's Government to make up his mind in order to advise him not to receive Dr Grobba

4. You should therefore thank Ibn Saud for his friendly action in consulting His Majesty's Government They would naturally much prefer, so far as their own interests are concerned, that Dr. Grobba should not be admitted to Saudi Arabia. Since Ibn Saud has asked for a frank expression of their views, they have no hesitation in saying so. Furthermore, Dr. Grobba proved a most successful intriguer and propagandist while German Minister in Bagdad, and did not hesitate to work, not merely against British interests in that country, but also against the Iraqi Government in power (This part of your message could be amplified on the basis of Sir B. Newton's telegram, omitting however, the passage about Shekib Arslan's activities.) It is admittedly a much more serious diplomatic step to declare an already accredited Minister *persona non grata* in the absence of definite proof of misbehaviour (which may not in the circumstances be available) than to do so in respect of a new Minister whose *agrément* is being sought. But notwithstanding this consideration and without prejudice to your judicious preliminary remarks to the Amir Feisal, His Majesty's Government would advise Ibn Saud, in all the circumstances and in his own interests as much as their own, to reply that he has been unfavourably impressed by the stories reaching him of Dr Grobba's activities in Bagdad and would prefer not to receive him At the same time, His Majesty's Government appreciate the difficulty of Ibn Saud's situation and would certainly not hold it against him if he found himself compelled to receive Dr Grobba after all

5. The question of receiving German representatives generally is rather difficult It is convenient for His Majesty's Government that Ibn Saud should remain neutral in the present war In fact, any suggestion to the contrary is bound to be embarrassing for various reasons, including Italian suspicions and the difficulty which always confronts His Majesty's Government in providing any tangible reward for Ibn Saud's loyalty Apart, therefore, from a general need to avoid asking Ibn Saud for favours, His Majesty's Government must endeavour to avoid asking him to act in any manner inconsistent with neutrality or with normal diplomatic relations between two States at peace with one another A refusal on the part of Ibn Saud to receive any German representative would certainly be inconsistent with such relations

6. Moreover, His Majesty's Government are likely in such matters to conserve their influence and so gain most in the long run by trusting Ibn Saud, especially when he has given so clear an indication of the line which he really wishes to follow, and by refraining from advising him in what might seem [illegible] interests [illegible] inconsistent with his.

7. I therefore consider (although reluctantly) that, if this point arises (which it may not necessarily do at once), you should say that His Majesty's Government recognise that a refusal by Ibn Saud to receive any German representative at all would be inconsistent with normal diplomatic relations, and that this being so, they do not wish, in Ibn Saud's own interests, to ask him to take this action. You could add, however, that it is to be hoped that if any German representative is admitted to Saudi Arabian territory, he will be most carefully watched and, in particular, be closely restricted in regard to the numbers of his staff

8. As regards Saudi representation at Rome, I see no ground on which His Majesty's Government could object

(Addressed to Jedda, No. 2. Repeated to Cairo, No 21 (for M I C E), Bagdad, No. 0, and (Saving) to Jerusalem, unnumbered.)

E 183/183 25] No. 7

Mr Troit to Mr Baggallay.—(Received January 15, 1940.)

Secret

M[illegible] Baggallay. *Jedda, December 26, 1939*

I SEND you herewith a copy of an interesting letter dated the 18th December received from de Gaury. In telegraphing to me two days later about Ibn Saud's approaches [illegible] between Iraq and Ibn de Gaury referred to this letter and said that Ibn Saud was pressing him for a reply to his recent declaration and his offer to co-operate with us, emphasising the

need for early preparations against coming events. So I hope the letter will [illegible] had in [illegible] his recent long statement, on which Bullard commented in his despatch No. 160 of the 13th November, 1939 (¹)

2. Perhaps the truth of the matter is, as Yusuf Yasin says, Ibn Saud regards himself as always at war, and wants to do his bit in the present conflict, without quite deciding what that bit is or ought to be. At any rate there is a good deal of material for you and our new Minister to think over

3. The state of the Saudi finances seems to be worse than we had thought, and, with a small pilgrimage inevitable, the immediate outlook is not rosy It is a good thing that Bashir as Sadawi, a man of increasing importance, has been instructed to go into the question of cutting down expenditure

4. As for the methods in which we might help the King, there is one which de Gaury does not mention . it is the formation of a National Bank You will remember that the Minister of Finance raised this difficult question with me as recorded in my despatch No. 135 E, of the 22nd August, 1939. No doubt what he was really contemplating was getting British help in straightening out accounts which it is impossible to balance, so that the onus of failure could be cast on someone else. The functions and the powers of the bank would have to be very carefully thought out: but it may be possible, with goodwill on the Saudi side, to devise some means of British assistance in getting order out of chaos in Government finance One great difficulty would be the control of the expenditure of the court

5. As for the provision of meteorological data, we have already endeavoured to get the permission of Ibn Saud for the importation of meteorological instruments offered us by the Sudan Government, without much success. Yusuf Yasin seemed to think that instruments erected on our roofs would be liable to misinterpretation. However, de Gaury's proposal to train the Saudis to record their own meteorological data is on a different footing The difficulty might be to persuade the Saudis of the necessity of having such data at all perhaps when some of their ancient aeroplanes crash in bad weather (which God forbid) they might see the need more clearly

Yours sincerely
ALAN C TROTT

Enclosure in No 7

Mr de Gaury to Mr Trott

(No 8. Secret)

My dear Trott, *Riyadh, December* 18, 1939

I HAVE had, as you will have supposed, many audiences of the King since I have been here Some of them have been very long, and Sheikh Yusuf told me that His Majesty had spoken at greater length than usual He himself said that he had not talked to anyone so much since his talks with Sir Percy Cox

2. In point of fact he has not so much given me new material as embroidered the theme given in his recent "declaration," a copy of which Sir Reader Bullard enclosed with his secret despatch No 160 of the 13th November to the Secretary of State

3. We have, in our talks, made many excursions—into history, the politics of neighbouring States [illegible] remained imprecise. I have come to the conclusion that it is meant to be so In all his prolonged talks he has never come to a precise conclusion except that once there was mention of "practical aid" to us in case of need I was interested to note that Sheikh Yusuf has now added to his oft repeated remark about our giving of 60 million to Turkey and not 60 piastres to Saudi Arabia, "We are ready to be helped"

4. His Majesty left me at Kharj alone with his Minister of Finance and the hope that we should spend several days together He must have been disappointed that I showed little inclination to investigate the murky depths of the State's finance.

(¹) Further correspondence in Eastern Affairs, No 181 Part XLV

5. With regard to Arab federation I feel sure that if Ibn Saud felt it were practical he would not so constantly emphasise to me his dislike of the Iraqi Government. He would gloss over their mutual troubles, not fasten on to them.

6 I believe that it is his intention to plant in our minds something like the following idea:—

> "Iraq is unreliable, the French are mismanaging things in Syria Palestine is troublesome The only strong man, Ibn Saud, the 'friend of B[illegible] who can put this right and bring the Arab States into line, so [illegible]y can make a stand against our enemies is powerless because he has no modern army and insufficient money
>
> "If we give him £1½ million a year and some modern equipment he would save the day for us when the time comes."

7. I give one and a half million as a figure because that is the sum Yusuf Yasin suddenly mentioned one day as likely to be the State's deficit in the coming year

8. Sheikh Yusuf also gave me another hint. *A propos* of quite another subject to this he said "You know the King is really always at war. He has campaigned so much, and had to deal with so many sudden changes in politics, due to war, that he is quick and impatient even in small things.

9 It would obviously be irksome for such a man as Ibn Saud to continue evenly on the way of peace without any engagement in the "great opportunity" now presented

10. Some remarks dropped in conversation by the *intelligentsia* of Riyadh, the North African and Syrian officials of the King's Diwan lead me to believe that the Government's finances are in an unhappy condition, but that with borrowings from the C.A.S.O.C [California-Arabia Standard Oil Company], against future royalties and with economies, with the making of which one of the officials, Bashir-as-Sadawi, has been specially charged, it should be able to keep going until the oil royalties begin to come into the Treasury in full, least in about two years' time

11 Subject to any new revelations in this field, I am not of the opinion [illegible] I think that we should keep it in mind. If the prices of food-stuffs rise much we may have to do so, or come to some helpful arrangement. I am writing to you separately about this, a subject raised by Sheikh Yusuf Yasin

12 With regard to the bigger issue which the King has raised, I do not suppose for one moment that His Majesty's Government intend to go all the way with him Should they go part of the way with him? Is the picture drawn for me by Yusuf Yasin [illegible] next year

13 Ways in which Ibn Saud could be helpful are dependent upon internal developments in the State [illegible] is settling in rapidly

14. The Government should be moving to keep pace with these changes and Ibn Saud knows it. He has recently brought to Riyadh a large number of soldiers and police in uniform He flouted the priests and there was no resistance It was a test case and important. Since then there have been many incidents of change which are startling to anyone who knew Riyadh even three years ago. There is talk of the first aeroplane coming to Riyadh, piloted by a Saudi pilot Abdullah-al-Mandili, from the Hejaz But with the relaxation of the stern Wahabi code to suit changing conditions there must be some concomitants of the new order There must be something like regular pay for State officials and soldiers, and a better organised army and police force. Even rigid economy will not provide a large enough margin for this.

15. This is not of great consequence to Great Britain it seems to me, unless there is some possibility of our requiring facilities from Ibn Saud later In that case we should do well to help him put his house in order now It will be at least two years before he begins to become richer and richer from oil royalties.

16. With regard to the facilities, those which occur to me are—

(a) The use of the lateral road along his northern frontier, from Koweit to Transjordan, and either Haifa or Akaba. Repair of this road could be carried out now if he had the money and an engineer. The King, if provided with these, would not object, as it would be advantageous to him to have a good frontier road. [illegible] he felt our holding in the Koweit Bay was unimpaired. If part of it were ceded by Koweit to Iraq he would no doubt think differently.

(b) The use of landing grounds in North and North Eastern Arabia, the grounds being provided with petrol reserves. This would be [illegible] to the King, and if he were [illegible] the money he might not object to making the necessary improvements and building petrol tanks during the coming year, for the use of his own air force.

(c) The provision of meteorological data. His own air force will, or should, presumably require this, and I do not see that there could be any grave objections to a few Saudi Arabs being trained for this work in Egypt, so that in case of need the Saudi Arab Government could arrange to furnish the information to our air force, or, perhaps, to the Bahrein Government for transmission.

17. There are probably other facilities which we might like to have given to us. I have mentioned those which have occurred to me, and the preparation for which need not affect Saudi Arabian neutrality, since they are consonant with a normal programme of modernisation, which the King seems impatient to begin.

18. I believe that His Majesty is genuinely anxious to help if he can, but at the same time he hopes that there will be incidental advantage to him. If we do think that sooner or later we may require facilities, I suggest that the matter be considered and dealt with expeditiously. Everything takes a long time in this country.

19. If the possibility of our requiring Ibn Saud's "practical aid" is very remote, I think we should lead him to understand this. It will make a difference to his plans, and perhaps still the mind of that restless old campaigner, whom we courted in the last Great War.

Yours, &c.
G. DE GAURY

E 223 112 63] No. 8

Mr. Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received January 16.)

(No. 12.)
(Telegraphic.) *Jedda, January 16, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 2.

As I shall be unable to see either the King or Feisal for some days I have addressed a note to the King on the lines indicated.

2. I have stated that as he has been good enough to ask for His Majesty's Government's advice, they unhesitatingly advise him to refuse Grobba's request. I have used Sir B. Newton's arguments as a basis for my remarks, and have suggested the penultimate sentence of paragraph 4 of your telegram as a suitable reply.

3. I have omitted at this stage any mention of the possibility of his agreeing after all to accept Grobba, especially in view of Hafez Wahba's opinion that he could find a way to keep him out.

4. I gather clearly from Feisal that Ibn Saud was worried at the idea, not of refusing a German representative (this would be easy on the ground that they had no common interests—Germany as distinct from all other countries represented here is not a Moslem Power), but of refusing Grobba, an already accredited representative.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 5, Bagdad, No. 6, and Jerusalem, No. 36.)

E 252 252 25] No. 9

Mr. Stonehewer-Bird to Viscount Halifax. (Received January 18.)

(Nos. 15 and 16.)
(Telegraphic.) *Jedda, January 18, 1940.*

MY telegram No. 12.

Hafiz Wahba called on me this morning. He told me that he had had [illegible] views and wishes before me.

2. [illegible] King had told him, had been almost threatening [illegible] with the Amir Feisal. Mussolini had given his word to Hitler that [illegible]

3. He had had long talks with Sir R. Bullard and Mr. de Gaury and had [illegible] by Sir John Shuckburgh and by Mr. Butler, and that I could assure him that one and all they expressed admiration and gratitude for the attitude His Majesty [illegible] tangible proofs of His Majesty's Government's confidence, I would submit for their sympathetic consideration any suggestions he could make.

4. Hafiz Wahba stated that what the King regarded as vital was a guarantee of assistance in the case of aggression against his territory by another [illegible] convinced that if the King could obtain such a promise of assistance, he would refuse admittance to Grobba and risk Italian displeasure.

5. As regards immediate assistance, Hafiz Wahba [illegible] the King wished [illegible] to [illegible] till the end of the war. [illegible] His Majesty's Government would [illegible] No. 104 of 1939, and he hoped they would [illegible] at a nominal price.

6. He also wanted a credit of £250,000 gold for the purchase of food stuffs [illegible] The pilgrimage had fallen far below expectations and the country's [illegible] be guaranteed or repaid. Hafiz Wahba replied that the important thing was for us to be authorised to state that the question was having your Lordship's [illegible] sympathetic [illegible] "This is a very difficult moment for Saudi Arabia and a most favourable moment for His Majesty's Government to show their generosity."

7. As regards the feasibility of giving guarantee against aggression [illegible] Wahba [illegible] the advantage of [illegible] Ibn Saud's whole hearted support far outweighed the possible loss of a [illegible] or even the whole of the sum he asks, and the [illegible]

8. Hafiz Wahba said that the matter was very urgent, as the Italians would return to the charge as soon as the pilgrimage was over on Monday. I [illegible] to request a very urgent reply.

(Repeated to Cairo, Nos. 7 and 8, Bagdad, Nos. 8 and 9; and Jerusalem, Nos. 8 and 9.)

[E 261/166/25] **No. 10**

Mr. Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received January 18.)

No. 13
(Telegraphic.) *Jedda, January 18, 1940.*

SAUDI-IRAQI relations.

1. [illegible] reports [illegible] King shows [illegible] Iraq [illegible] He showed [illegible] represent [illegible] the [illegible]

2. [illegible] that [illegible] Muscat [illegible] Government [illegible]

3. [illegible] Saudi Arabia and Iraq as a green paper.

4. Sheikh Yusuf Yasin read to me draft [illegible] reply sent to Iraqi Government in which it was hinted that Ibn Saud would appeal to Iraqi nation over the head of Iraqi Government. It argued that, if unratified agreements are not to be implemented, the Shamma tribe should, under the Treaty of Mohammara, return to Nedj.

5. It was in response to this letter than Iraq managed to defer to Saudi Arabian views on various points arising out of survey of frontier.

6. The King requests His Majesty's Government's views on his proposal for a commission, but wishes Iraqi Government "*not to be informed*" that he is making this enquiry.

7. Text of de Gaury's report follows by bag.

(Repeated to Bagdad, No. 7; Jerusalem, No. 7; Cairo, No. 6, and Bushire Saving.)

[E 285/207/25] **No. 11**

Mr. Stonehewer-Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received January 21.)

(No. 18.)
(Telegraphic.) *Jedda, January 21, 1940.*

MY telegram No. 15.

Sheikh Hafiz Wahba informed me this evening that Ibn Saud had caused Italian Minister to be told, for the information of Mussolini and German Government, that he could not agree to allow Grobba to take up residence here. The reason given was that Grobba [illegible] Minister Resident at Bagdad [illegible] paid short infrequent visits to Saudi Arabia, he had never taken up residence here. Ibn Saud added that, whilst he did not wish to sever diplomatic relations with Germany, he equally did not wish to prejudice his friendly relations with Great Britain and France, as might well result if he allowed Hitler to establish for the first time a legation at Jedda when Germany was at war with friends of Saudi Arabia.

2. Hafiz Wahba said that these arguments were used to the exclusion of the argument that Grobba was *persona non grata* lest Germany should reply submitting another name.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 9, and Bagdad, No. 10, of 22nd January.)

[E 176/176/91] **No. 12**

Mr. Baggallay to M. Roché (French Embassy).

Foreign Office, January 30, 1940.

My dear Roché,

The other day you told me that the attention of the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs had been drawn to the Muscat Order in Council of the 25th July, 1939, and that it seemed to the Ministry that, by this Order in Council, His Majesty's Government had incorporated or purported to incorporate the territory of the Sultan of Muscat in the Indian Empire.

2. I write to assure you that nothing was further from the intentions of His Majesty's Government in issuing this Order in Council, which is only meant, as I explained to you at the time, to lay down the manner in which the extra-territorial rights enjoyed by The King in the territory of the Sultan shall be exercised by His Majesty's [illegible]. [illegible] essential difference between the new Order in Council and the Muscat Order in Council of the 3rd February, 1915, of which I attach a copy for convenience,(¹) and the words which you quoted to me from the preamble, "whereas by treaty, capitulation, grant, usage, sufferance and other lawful means His Majesty has jurisdiction within the territories of the Sultan of Muscat and Oman," are common to all extra-territorial Orders in Council.

3. The new Order in Council has been made necessary by the conclusion on the 5th February, 1939, of a new Anglo-Muscat Treaty of Commerce and Navigation (Cmd. 6037). The 1939 treaty differed substantially from the previous treaty of the 18th March, 1891, by its fuller recognition of the Sultan's sovereign rights, and did so in two ways:—

(*a*) The Sultan's financial autonomy was admitted by the substitution of "most-favoured-nation" privileges for the previous specific limitation on the Muscat customs tariff (article 5); and

(*b*) In place of the complete extra-territorial rights previously enjoyed provision was made for the application by His Majesty's Consul to British subjects of all Muscat laws and regulations which it is desirable to apply to them (article 15).

The changes of detail rendered necessary by the new treaty in the procedure laid down in the 1915 Order in Council were effected by the issue of the Order in Council which has come to the notice of the French Government.

4. In the opinion of His Majesty's Government the international status of Muscat remains entirely unchanged by the treaty of the 5th February, 1939, and the Order in Council of the 25th July, 1939.

Yours sincerely,
LACY BAGGALLAY.

(¹) Not printed.

E 385/252/25] **No. 13**

Viscount Halifax to Mr. Stonehewer Bird (Jedda).

(No. 9.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, January 30, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 18 [of the 21st January: Dr. Grobba].

I am not sure how far this telegram supersedes your telegrams Nos. 15 and 16 [of the 18th January], but I propose to reply on assumption—

(*a*) That, if the Italo-German reaction to Ibn Saud's refusal to receive a German representative is very strong, he may renew his request for a guarantee; and

(*b*) That in any event he needs and expects material assistance.

It is on this basis that the following observations are made:—

2. In refusing to receive not only Dr. Grobba but any German representative Ibn Saud has taken a very strong step, and now that he has taken it on his own responsibility His Majesty's Government think he should be encouraged to persist in it. They are satisfied that if he does so he will have nothing to fear.

3. As regards guarantee His Majesty's Government clearly cannot let Ibn Saud think they would fail to protect him from the consequences of a decision which he doubtless regards as in accordance with their wishes. At the same time they have no wish to tie their hands as to precise manner in which they would uphold Saudi interests in circumstances which cannot now be foreseen or, for the reasons indicated below, to give more precise assurances than are necessary.

4. Sixth paragraph of Prime Minister's letter of the 23rd March, 1939, and paragraph 2 of my telegram No. 69 [of the 27th April, 1939] contain [illegible] Saud if attacked. But His Majesty's Government have hitherto refrained from being explicit. Main reason has been possible Italian suspicion that spirit of [illegible] would raise numerous incidental problems, *e.g.*, whether it was personal to Ibn Saud, period of validity, against whom it was valid, &c. A further objection is that Ibn Saud would probably expect protection directly he was threatened, [illegible] operations could be fitted into their general strategic plans.

5. At this time there are even graver objections to being explicit. Circumstances may arise compelling His Majesty's Government to defend integrity and independence of Saudi Arabia by force of arms even while still engaged in a major war elsewhere. But ways in which these might be threatened [illegible] must keep their hands absolutely free to deal with breaches of Middle Eastern Agreement, as with all other Anglo-Italian questions, as the needs of the moment may require. To do otherwise would be to run risks which it is not even in Ibn Saud's own interest that they should do.

6. If assurance of some kind had now to be given, the best would be *ad hoc* assurance that if Italy retaliated for refusal of Dr. Grobba by attacking Ibn Saud or seizing any part of his territory His Majesty's Government would come to his assistance. It is unlikely, however, that Italy would do anything so simple as to "attack" or "seize," so that even this formula might have effect of embroiling His Majesty's Government with Italy in some unforeseen manner at a dangerous moment.

7. The objections of His Majesty's Government to complicating their diplomacy with Italy are, however, of a general character. So far as this particular incident is concerned, it seems unlikely that untoward results need be apprehended. If Italy were to try conclusions with this country she might violate Saudi Arabian territory (though it is difficult to see what she would gain by it) in the course of local operations, and if she were eventually victorious she might dominate Saudi Arabia altogether. If, moreover, she were convinced that nothing she could do would win Ibn Saud from his friendship for Great Britain, she might intrigue against him among his own people. But it is difficult to believe that pending the success of such intrigues she would deliberately prejudice her relations with a ruler whose goodwill would be of importance in any policy of adventure, or *à fortiori* break Middle Eastern Agreement and risk war with Great Britain, merely because Ibn Saud refused a German representative.

8. It is not easy, however, to reconcile reluctance to give explicit assurances [illegible] are never likely to arise, and in order to avoid accusation that His Majesty's Government are encouraging Ibn Saud to run risks from which they are unwilling to protect him it seems essential that you should at need make it clear that whatever he may feel compelled to do in this connexion hereafter he will not forfeit their friendship.

9. Meanwhile, I shall be glad if you will, if you see no objection, reply in following terms:—

10. His Majesty's Government have learnt with interest of Ibn Saud's attitude to Dr. Grobba's visit, and applaud the resolution with which he has acted. Having taken his stand, they think it necessary for his own dignity and from every point of view that he should stick to it. They are convinced that he need have no apprehensions about the consequences. It is almost unthinkable that Italy would break Middle Eastern Agreement and risk war with Great Britain for the sake of German representation in Saudi Arabia. His Majesty's Government have always tried to advise Ibn Saud in his own best interests. In this case advice was based on sincere belief that misunderstandings to which reception of a diplomatist of Dr. Grobba's reputation would give rise, and intrigue which he might attempt, would be as embarrassing and dangerous for Ibn Saud as for His Majesty's Government. If they had had slightest ground to suppose that refusal might have serious consequences, they would certainly have warned him. If Ibn Saud feels that Italian retaliation is nevertheless

possible, they invite him to read again the assurances contained in messages referred to at beginning of paragraph 4 above. They think these two messages will show Ibn Saud that they regard his interests as their own.

11. See also my two immediately following telegrams.

(Addressed to Jedda No. 9. Repeated to Cairo, No. 9A, Saving; Bagdad No. 7, Saving; and Jerusalem, unnumbered.)

E 385/252/25] **No. 14**

Viscount Halifax to Mr. Stonehewer Bird (Jedda)

(No. 11.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, January 30, 1940.*

MY telegrams Nos. 9 and 10 [of 30th January: Ibn Saud's requests for assurances against aggression and material assistance].

I realise that replies about guarantees and material assistance contained in these telegrams may not by themselves give Ibn Saud that assurance that His Majesty's Government appreciate his friendship, for which he evidently hankers. Therefore authorise you, at your discretion, to speak on lines indicated in paragraphs 2 to 4 below in confidential conversation, should an opportunity to do so present itself. If you can conveniently await my reply to Sir Reader Bullard's despatch No. 160 [of the 13th November], this may give you some useful supplementary guidance, particularly as what is said below also applies to a great extent to Ibn Saud's proposals for Arab co-operation. But this is not essential. I give you full latitude as to manner in which you present your argument, as last thing I wish is to give impression that His Majesty's Government are irritated by Ibn Saud's constant suggestions and requests for assurances. Their difficulties go far deeper than that.

2. His Majesty's Government have complete confidence in Ibn Saud's loyalty. They realise to the full how difficult is the path which he has followed over Palestine, for instance, during the last few years. For this and numerous other marks of friendship they are and always will be grateful. But it is not only a question of loyalty and gratitude. Just as Ibn Saud has explained his friendship for His Majesty's Government in terms of his own interests, so His Majesty's Government can explain their friendship for him in terms of their own interests. For their own sakes they *want* him to maintain his present dominions, to retain his own power within those dominions, and in due course to pass on his power undiminished to his son. All their influence will always be exerted to these ends, for if things happened otherwise the ensuing confusion would be very dangerous for themselves and their policy.

3. His Majesty's Government hope that in return Ibn Saud will have confidence in them. They see as clearly as he does the dangers which threaten his interests as well as theirs from so many quarters, and they are as anxious as he is to provide for and avert these dangers. But in these days they are pursuing a course where a single false step may have momentous consequences. This applies not only to their relations with Great Powers like Italy and the Soviet Union, but also to many smaller Powers, some of them neighbours of Ibn Saud's, whose conflicting interests and wishes His Majesty's Government must reconcile as best they can. For his sake as well as their own, they must keep their hands absolutely free to conduct their diplomacy with all the skill they possess. For this reason they hope he will not press them too closely to give precise indications or assurances as to how they would act in various contingencies which have not yet arisen, and may never do so. Their ultimate aims are the same as his, to preserve the independence and integrity of Saudi Arabia. But the manner of attaining these aims must depend upon innumerable factors which only the moment when it comes can disclose.

4. His Majesty's Government prefer to say these things frankly to Ibn Saud [illegible] reservations as to have little value. Meanwhile, they think they can say that so far as external dangers are concerned his position is safer to-day and (unless Great Britain were to be defeated by Germany) is likely to remain safer than that of any other ruler outside America. Even if the war were to spread nearer the Middle East, Saudi Arabia would be likely to be the last country to be

engulfed. Should the war do so, His Majesty's Government will not hesitate to let Ibn Saud know if there is any way in which he could assist their comm[illegible] purpose, though they hope this necessity will not arise. For the rest they will [illegible] his country.

(Repeated to Bagdad, No. 9, Cairo, No. 11, Savin[illegible] and Jerusalem, unnumbered.)

[E 385 252 25] No. 15

Viscount Halifax to Mr. Stonehewer-Bird (Jedda)

(No. 10.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, January* 31, 1940

MY telegram No. 9 [of 30th January: Ibn Saud's request for assurance against aggression.]

I am impressed by Mr. de Gaury's letter to Mr. Trott of 18th December and can understand Ibn Saud's feelings. As a matter of fact, His Majesty's Government need little from him at present, except that he should be strong in his own territory and adopt a general attitude of benevolent neutrality. But I recognise that for the first of these things, at any rate, he may need material assistance.

2. As you know from correspondence enclosed in my despatch No. 1 [of 1st January], War Office cannot at present release any arms or [illegible] although they may later be able to offer some 200 Hotchkiss guns. By [illegible] with most countries, however, Ibn Saud is in no danger of foreign attack [illegible] therefore, you have serious ground to think that his internal security is in [illegible] owing to lack of arms, His Majesty's Government must continue for the present with minor exceptions, to use war material at their disposal for countries nearer fighting line.

3. His Majesty's Government are ready, however, to help Ibn Saud in financial sphere. They cannot now grant credits for so much as £250,000 gold but, in addition to existing offer of credit of £85,000 for arms (which remains open until such time as Ibn Saud can find something to buy with it), they are prepared to make payments for the account of the Saudi Arabian Government to the extent of £100,000 sterling for use in India. Details as to interest (which would be described as charges), period, &c., will be worked out later, but general [illegible] His M[illegible] to that amount. Beyond this, I can make no promises at present, except that further suggestions for helping Saudi Arabia (including those put forward by Mr. de Gaury and by Mr. Trott in his covering letter) will be sympathetically considered.

4. In preceding paragraph I have avoided speaking of "subsidy," as to do so seems more consonant with Ibn Saud's self respect. But His Majesty's Government have no illusions as to prospects of repayment. Moreover, although His Majesty's Government would prefer to have money spent on something like food stuffs, which would be of use to the population of Saudi Arabia, they will put it at Ibn Saud's disposal for other purposes, if you think that political advantage might be gained thereby.

5. You may therefore inform Ibn Saud that while His Majesty's Government will see what can be done in matter of arms and ammunition, they cannot hold out great hopes in this direction. They will, however, meet bills for food stuffs purchased in India up to £100,000 sterling, details as to charges, &c., and as to machinery for payment being arranged later. Meanwhile, existing offer of credit of £85,000 for arms remains open, and in addition, His Majesty's Government will always consider sympathetically further suggestions for securing prosperity of Saudi Arabia, subject to general warning that while their resources may seem considerable, the demands upon those resources are enormous.

(Addressed to Jedda, No. 10. Repeated to Cairo, No. 10, Saving, Bagdad No. 8, Saving; and Jerusalem, unnumbered, Saving.)

[E 483 1 25] No. 16

Mr. Stonehewer-Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received February 3.)

(No. 2.)
My Lord, *Jedda, January* 10, 1940

I HAVE [illegible] of my letters of credence and of my request to be informed when I might present the original to His Majesty King Abdul Aziz, the Minister for Foreign Affairs deputed the Governor of Jedda to call and discuss the question with me.

2. The Governor suggested that, as His Majesty was absent in Nejd and would not be visiting Jedda until after the pilgrimage—in about a fortnight's time—I might prefer to present my credentials to the Viceroy, His Royal Highness the Amir Feisal.

3. [illegible] present my letters [illegible] letter from The [illegible] Aziz.

[illegible]

I [illegible]

F. H. W. STONEHEWER BIRD.

[E 515 252 25] No. 17

Mr. Stonehewer-Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received February 5.)

(No. 21.)
(Telegraphic.) *Jedda, February* 5, 1940

YOUR telegrams Nos. 9, 10 and 11.

I have had two long interviews with Ibn Saud and many talks with Hafiz Wahba, on which I am reporting fully by despatch.

2. Following summary shows results.—

King does not intend to change his mind about the reception of G[illegible] [illegible] His M[illegible] was taken with a view to his own material gain. He had asked for assistance weeks before the question of Grobba arose. He had also, I replied, taken his decision without awaiting response of His Majesty's Government to his appeal.

As regards the guarantee, I have, I trust and believe, succeeded in convincing Ibn Saud that, though we cannot commit anything to paper in more explicit terms than those used in Prime Minister's and Sir R. Bullard's letters (your telegram No. 69 of 1939), he can have full confidence in us. I made use of the most helpful material contained in paragraphs 2 and 4 of your Lordship's telegram No. 11. I also used the argument in the last sentence of paragraph 7 of telegram No. 9 and spoke at length from my [group omitted] glanced to Italian [illegible] Africa of Italy's difficulties in coping with her existing commitments and [illegible] sent improbable [group omitted] of her launching forth on new and pointless adventures in the Red Sea. The war, a tragedy for most nations, afforded Italy, for as long as she remained quiet, [two groups undecypherable] opportunity to repair the very serious breaches in her financial structure.

3. H[illegible] any rate temporarily, the Italian bogy and that the King was satisfied with the assurances and wanted no further.

(Repeated to Cairo, Bagdad, Jerusalem, all No. 12.)

E 541 252 25 No. 18

Mr Stonehewer-Bird to Viscount Halifax (Received February 5.)

(No. 22.)
(Telegraphic.) *Jedda, February 5, 1940*

MY immediately preceding telegram.

At first interview King showed bitter disappointment at offer of £100,000 credit for food stuffs. He must, he said, reject it. His people and his enemies alike would say that this represented in His Majesty's Government's eyes, his value as a friend. His Majesty's Government did not understand. They wanted him to be strong in his own country. For this he must either distribute money and food generously or undertake punitive expeditions. He needed for the duration of the war when his better revenue would be further reduced by falling off in the pilgrimage, credit for at least £800,000. He did not want to use it now, but he needed it to allay the fears of his people for the future. He ended his forcible, though entirely good-natured, harangue, by smiling, saying that "even if I do not get a penny, I am still your friend."

2. I could only say I would report to His Majesty's Government what he [illegible] and it was decided to leave the question for further discussion on the next day. I asked Hafiz Wahba to come and see me before my next interview, and learnt that the King was worried on two counts: (1) the meagreness of his reward as an old friend and compared with that of our new friend Turkey; (2) publicity. Everyone would know that His Majesty's Government was paying his bills in India, and would know the low limit. If he had hesitated to use the arms credit, it was because the [group undecypherable] of the loan to Turkey had been published, and odious comparisons would have been drawn.

3. I told Hafiz Wahba that I saw little hope of His Majesty's Government being able to provide a credit of £800,000. £100,000 could be regarded as a loan between friends, but higher figure meant a full-dress commercial transaction, with awkward questions of security, &c. In one respect, however, I thought we could meet the King. His Majesty's Government might perhaps agree (please see paragraph 4 of your telegram No. 10) not to tie Ibn Saud down as to the manner in which he used the money, and thus avoid publicity consequent on Indian purchase arrangement. Hafiz Wahba agreed that this would help especially if £85,000 could similarly be freed and the total figure raised by £15,000 to £200,000.

4. My subsequent interview with Ibn Saud forms the subject of my immediately following telegram.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 4, Bagdad, No. 1, and Jerusalem, No. 1, all Saving.)

E 524 252 25 No. 19

Mr Stonehewer-Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received February 5.)

(No. 23.)
(Telegraphic.) *Jedda, February 5, 1940*

MY immediately preceding telegram.

I saw the King yesterday morning and told him that I had thought over the matter of credits, and feared that, in the light of my instructions, it was useless to ask for £800,000 immediate credit. Perhaps we could agree on a proposal more in keeping with that of His Majesty's Government. I then suggested, as a purely personal idea, that I should ask you to open a free credit for him for £200,000 [illegible] this next [illegible]

2. He launched forth into a lengthy talk about his long friendship and Turkey's new friendship—the old friendship was fobbed off with a pittance, and the old enemy received £60 million. I said he must not draw this comparison. What His Majesty's Government [I was] specially offering him was a loan to a friend in temporary difficulties, the loan to Turkey was a commercial transaction. Moreover, sum loaned to Turkey was in the nature of expenditure on [illegible] to the Middle East. Saudi Arabia was not, and we hoped never would be, in the zone of hostilities.

3. I suggested that if anyone criticised the size of his credit, he could say that [illegible] appeal once again to the generosity of his friends.

4. He finally agreed that if he were offered a credit for £200,000, unrestricted as to its use, and if hopes were held out that his needs next year would [illegible] that the matter might be concluded most urgently, as within the next few days the new year began and he must make his purchases of food-stuffs and distribute presents. As regards arms, he hoped His Majesty's Government would [illegible]

5. I sincerely trust that it may prove possible to give immediate effect to his proposal. I [illegible] He was agreed to trust us and not to press for a written guarantee. A satisfactory solution to these two problems was regarded as being of highest importance, and I am confident that you will agree that the granting of a loan of £200,000 [illegible] as it does a mere addition of £15,000 to the existing sums earmarked as credits, is a minimum return for these signal marks of Ibn Saud's loyalty and confidence.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 5, Saving; Bagdad, No. 2, Saving; Jerusalem, No. 2, Saving.)

E 543 56 91] No. 20

His Majesty The King to His Majesty the King of the Yemen (Sana'a)

(Telegraphic.) *En clair.* *February 8, 1940*

IN your telegram of the 21st November your Majesty expressed the wish that further delay should be avoided in opening the proposed [illegible] an equitable and mutually acceptable settlement of the southern frontier [illegible]

I share your Majesty's wish, and my Government have thought it desirable to appoint as their representative in the negotiations an officer [illegible] the circumstances of the matter under dispute, who will be able to devote his whole [illegible]

I am happy to inform your Majesty that as a result Mr R. [illegible] who accompanied Sir Bernard Reilly to Sana'a at the time of the conclusion of the treaty of 1934, has been selected to represent my Government in the negotiations, and if acceptable to your Majesty the Government of Aden will make arrangements for him to open discussions with your Majesty's representatives at Sana'a.

I take this opportunity to renew to your Majesty my best wishes for your long life and happiness and the prosperity of your kingdom.—GEORGE R.I.

E 563 143 25] No. 21

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received February 8.)

(No. 30.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, February 8, 1940*

FOLLOWING addressed to Jerusalem telegram No. 6:—

"Your telegram No. 36 of 1939 and Jedda telegram No. 11.

"Iraqi Government inform me that the Iraqi Saudi Arabian survey party expect to reach Jebel Anaza about 18th February, and request representative of His Majesty's Government will join them there on that date."

[E 564, 143 25] No. 22

Sir B Newton to Viscount Halifax —(Received February 8.)

(No. 31.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, February 8, 1940*

MY telegram No. 6 to Jerusalem and my despatch No. 759 of 1939

[illegible]

technical and preparatory request party should be given instructions to fix exact [illegible]

They add that this work would, of course, be without prejudice to the views of any of the parties as to terminal point

(Repeated to Jerusalem, No. 7.)

E 597 183 25] No. 23

Mr. Stonehewer-Bird to Viscount Halifax —(Received February 10.)

(No. 4)
Mr [illegible] *Jedda, January 20, 1940*

I HAVE the honour to transmit the accompanying copy of an interesting [illegible] drawn up by Captain de Gaury as a result of two months' stay with King [illegible]

2 [illegible] Majesty's Government is similar to that of Sir R Bullard (please see his despatch No. 19 [illegible] 1939) There is, however, this difference between Ibn Saud's *exposés* to my predecessor and to Captain de Gaury; the King is now much more open in expressing his hope that His Majesty's Government will assist him materially [illegible] in my telegram No. 15 of the 18th January 1940, the form which Ibn Saud considered this assistance might take, and I am reporting in a separate despatch the views I have been able to form since my arrival

I have, &c.
F H W STONEHEWER BIRD

Enclosure in No. 23

Memorandum by Captain de Gaury

SINCE we have been living in camp my visits to the King every evening [illegible] Riyadh

They have also, except once when he was drowsy after a particularly hard day, been long.

Yesterday [illegible] asked him to define his attitude in regard to the war He and His Majesty's Government knew the ties of interest binding them one to another, but such people did not, so they wondered what was his attitude

[illegible] news from Berlin [illegible] telegram No. 36 of the 4th January, 1940, about the congratulations he was alleged to have sent to Hitler [illegible] of which he has since denied to me

Such people, he continued, were equally unperceiving about a declaration of neutrality, which was unnecessary He was not in the road of two warring nations or threatened by the nearness of fighting, so that it would be useful to declare his neutrality Could they think that he was going to march into Transjordan or Iraq? They must know that that was out of the question

He extended his talk on these lines and went on to speak of the aerial post across Arabia, via Riyadh, to Al Hasa from Jedda, which he hopes to inaugurate very soon with his own aircraft and pilots

From this he turned to the modernisation of his land forces. "Gradually," he said, "as the money comes in from the oil company, I shall increase the uniformed army to 5,000 or 6,000 men to be stationed mostly in Nejd Not that there will be anything for them to do there, but we must have an army for people and the world to see"

He praised the Nejdi as a natural soldier, who takes happily to military training

He also spoke of his relations with the Yemen, with which State he had just made a satisfactory agreement over a frontier matter, the division of flood waters of certain wadis

The impression left on my mind by this long talk was that he wished to allay any uneasiness we might feel about the future use of the uniformed Saudi Arab army, about which there will very likely be exaggerated reports in neighbouring countries

On the contrary did we but choose he would be content to have a more defined position on the Allied side In this case, however, he would hurry forward the formation of his uniformed army and the improvement of his air force, if lack of money were not found a stumbling block

I know that Ibn Saud was not required to enter the war at its onset, presumably because of the military responsibility it must have seemed such a materially weak ally would become

Now that the situation is changed by Italy's attitude, perhaps an avowal of his position as being on the Allied side would be advantageous, being a spur to others, and a distinct if light blow to Nazi Germany, and this worth consideration.

If it were thought advantageous and we were to respond agreeably to one of these talks by him, I believe that we should hear more of that word His Majesty so constantly uses (Maslaha) the meaning of which is benefit or self interest

He has said to me many times that he has to think always and before all of (*a*) his religion and what is imposed by it, (*b*) of his independence and its [illegible] his own "Maslaha"

It would cost Great Britain something

Whatever may be the decision in this matter, should Ibn Saud receive, during the war, credits on a large scale I think we should receive some benefit in turn from him As a hard bargainer himself he would expect something of the kind (He recently reminded me of Captain Shakespear's mission to him in the last war, in order to make point that he would not receive without giving in return. "I gave my word and carried it out")

Sheikh Yusuf Yasin has already suggested credits for imports of food-stuffs from India up to £500,000 sterling annually, "repayable after the war" Although there are no exports other than oil from Saudi Arabia as a surety for such credits, there are potential mineral resources, gold in particular and a [illegible] oil concession area, a lien on which might be specified as a substitute [illegible] It seems to me, however, that while obtaining some political advantage we could also guard against excessive material loss. In any case it is my opinion that Ibn Saud will be a disappointed man unless there is some bargaining to be done soon

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E 738 56 91] No. 24

The King of the Yemen to His Majesty The King. (Received February 12.)

[illegible]
(Telegraphic.) *En clair* *February 12, 1940.*

WITH a confirmation of my friendship and affection which are unshaken, I thank your M[illegible] [illegible] to Ibn Saud [illegible] the [illegible] to your Majesty in my telegraphic position dated the [illegible] July, 1939, I shall await, from your exalted and mighty Government, a

declaration and a confirmation of its justice and equity regarding the removal of the present encroachment on Shabwa and Al Abr six years after the drawing up and ratification of the treaty between the two States. Nevertheless, we accept the representative of your State—Mr Champion—with thanks and respect, and we shall treat with him and show him every mark of sincerity on the understanding that, with the good intentions of the two States, it is inevitable that we shall arrive at the best solution for the good of the two kingdoms for the present [illegible] for the future. I beg your Majesty and the Royal family to accept my respect and sincerest wishes.

E 635 509 91] No. 25

Exchange of letters between the Sultan of Muscat and Oman and the Political Agent, Muscat. (Received in Foreign Office from India Office, February 13, 1940.)

(1)

Political Agent, Muscat, to the Sultan of Muscat and Oman

(Secret.)

Your Highness, *November* 30, 1939.

I HAVE been directed to inform your Highness that His Majesty's Government in consultation with the Government of India have considered your Highness's statement of conditions on which you are prepared to afford them [illegible] war. At this stage when it is not possible to foresee how the course of the war will develop His Majesty's Government are unable to give any precise definition of the further facilities, if any, which they might require, but it is possible that in addition to the continuance of the facilities already granted to the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force it might be necessary for them to ask for other facilities of a similar nature. In that event they would inform your Highness as long as possible in advance of what is required in order that with your goodwill and co-operation the necessary arrangements may be made.

2. They wish in the first place to reaffirm their readiness to protect your Highness's territories, including Gwadur, from any external aggression resulting from the war, while in the event of internal disturbances they are prepared to give your Highness such assistance as may be possible.

3. In reply to your specific requests they desire to state that in return for your Highness's co-operation—

(*a*) They agree that your Highness should be a party to any peace treaty to the extent that it may involve Muscat territory or Muscat interests.

(*b*) They understand that, unless specific permission is given by your Highness, any facilities that might be desired during the war (*i.e.*, apart from those which your Highness had already granted in peace time) will terminate on the conclusion of peace.

(*c*) They undertake to consult your Highness on all political matters relating to your territory and to obtain your permission before entering into direct communication with tribal leaders of Oman.

(*d*) Special consideration will, whenever possible, be given to the needs of your State in connexion with the export to Muscat from India of staple food-stuffs such as wheat, flour, rice and sugar.

(*e*) To enable your Highness to undertake essential security measures they will grant you for the duration of the war and for a reasonable period after the cessation of hostilities a monthly allowance of 20,000 rupees (to date from 3rd September: two monthly payments being made in advance), together with an immediate grant of 50,000 rupees for the repair and construction of fortifications, and an advance of 50,000 rupees in respect of the Zanzibar subsidy. It is understood that receipt of these payments does not impose any obligation on your Highness to provide at your own expense guards for the protection of facilities granted to the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force.

(*f*) Finally as soon as supplies can be made available they are prepared to provide your Highness free with war stores as specified below, which include stores already offered to you:—

(1) Four light lorries.
(2) 300 rifles and 300 bayonets.
(3) 350,000 rounds s.a.a.
(4) Two 2·75-inch guns and carriages with 225 shell h.e. and 125 shrapnel with 200 reduced charge cartridges and friction tubes.
(5) Two semaphores and one Vickers gun and one Lewis gun.
(6) 250 rounds for 3-pounder guns.
(7) First aid equipment (including dressings and drugs).
(8) An annual allowance of 10,000 rounds s.a.a. for training purposes.

Your Highness will appreciate that in the existing circumstances some delay in supply is unavoidable, but His Majesty's Government and the Government of India will do their best to minimise delay so far as they can.

4. I have been further instructed to require your Highness to state clearly the scope of the security measures to be undertaken and to inform your Highness that continued payment of the war subsidy will be conditional on their prosecution.

5. I shall be grateful if your Highness will let me have your reply in writing confirming your acceptance as soon as possible.

Your Highness's sincere friend,
T. HICKINBOTHAM,
Captain, I. A.

(2)

Copy in Translation of a Letter dated Shawal 18, 1358 (*November* 30, 1939), *from His Highness the Sultan of Muscat and Oman to Captain T. Hickinbotham, O.B.E., His Britannic Majesty's Consul, Muscat.*

I HAVE received your secret letter dated the 30th November, 1939, and understood the contents to the effect that you have been instructed to inform us that our friend the Government of His Majesty The King of Great Britain in consultation with the Government of India have considered the conditions. Accordingly we are ready to afford the necessary facilities in our territories and territorial waters during the present war. We are always and will ever be thankful to them for their valuable assistance and owing to the strong and friendly [illegible] we on our part will be ready to give every facility and possible assistance. We agree to what is in your letter referred to above to give necessary facilities in our territory and territorial waters during this war according to the conditions mentioned therein. We understand what you have mentioned in your paragraph No. 4. There is no doubt that the subsidy will be used for the purpose of war [illegible] you. We hope you will assure His Majesty's Government that the subsidy will be spent for the purpose for which it is intended. Herewith enclosed is a list(1) showing what has been decided up to the present for the expenditure of the subsidy. There will be [illegible] according to the circumstances prevailing at the time. More [illegible] will be available after fuller consideration. Regarding the arms and ammunition that His Majesty's Government are favouring us with, we realise that there will be some delay in receiving them. But we are [illegible] that His Majesty's Government will endeavour to supply them as soon as possible, as they know we are in need of arms and ammunition at present.

(1) Not printed. These appendices show that the Sultan intends to spend Rs. 50,000 on fortifications and to raise some 500 irregular troops. They also give an estimate of the yearly cost of the security measures on which the war subsidy is to be spent.

E 688 166 25] No. 26

Mr. Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received February 15.)

(No. 28.)
(Telegraphic.) *Jedda, February 15, 1940*

MY telegram No. 13.

Yusif Yasin, on instructions from Ibn Saud, left with me copies of the notes referred to in Sir B. Newton's letter of 16th January. Full translation follows by bag.

2. Two-thirds of the note from the Saudi Minister at Bagdad to Minister for Foreign Affairs of 6th January is devoted to misdeeds of the Shammar tribe constituting or arising out of the breaches of Mohammerah Bahra and "bon voisinage" treaties. Brook suggests three alternatives:—

(1) Tribal nationality treaty to be ratified without modification.
(2) Treaty of Mohammerah to be enforced and Nejd Shammar returned to Nejd.
(3) Nejd Shammar to be moved beyond the Euphrates.

3. Yusif Yasin, in handing me the notes, stated that Ibn Saud was still awaiting the views of His Majesty's Government on his suggestion that His Majesty's Government should adjudicate.

4. Hafiz Wahba, before he left with Ibn Saud for Riyadh last week, hinted that he might be sent to Bagdad to try and reach agreement. This seemed to me an excellent idea, and I expressed the hope that he would be successful, as I thought the questions called for settlement between the two parties rather than for active intervention of His Majesty's Government.

5. In the meantime, if Sir B. Newton could, as suggested in the letter of 16th January, say an appropriate word about loot, to which Ibn Saud attaches the greatest importance, it would help.

6. Ibn Saud requests the Iraqi Government should *not* be informed that notes have been shown to us.

(Repeated to Bagdad, No. 14; Cairo, No. 7, Saving; Jerusalem, No. 3 Saving; and Bushire, No. 2, Saving.)

E 604 804 93 No. 27

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received February 23.)

(No. 61.)
My Lord, [illegible] 12, 1940.

I HAVE [illegible] lead [illegible] Military [illegible] and [illegible] Yemen [illegible] army.

2. [illegible] is taking with him certain signalling equipment obtained by the Iraqi Government from the War Office. This is not, it appears, secret equipment, but the head of the military mission has warned the Iraqi Chief of the General Staff that he may have to object to certain types of equipment being sent outside Iraq in this manner.

3. [illegible] advise him what particular equipment should be treated as having been supplied for the exclusive use of the Iraqi army. The matter may also require consideration from the point of view of our relations with Italy.

I have, &c.
BASIL NEWTON

E 604 804 93] No. 28

Viscount Halifax to Sir B. Newton (Bagdad).

(No. 38.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, February 27, 1940*

YOUR despatch No. 61 [of 12th February: Despatch of Iraqi Military Mission to Yemen].

This is matter entirely between Iraqi and Yemen Governments, but in view of special position of His Majesty's Government in Iraq it might be interpreted as attempt to strengthen their position in Yemen at second hand and might even be regarded by Italian Government as contrary to spirit at least of Anglo-Italian Agreement of 1938.

2. In order to avoid raising unnecessary suspicions I am anxious to take initiative in telling Italian Government about this mission, news of which will, anyhow, reach them soon enough, subject to your views; this can probably be done more unostentatiously in Bagdad than in Rome or London.

Please therefore inform your Italian colleague orally what you have learned of this mission, which may be of interest to his Government.

E 945 252 25] No. 29

Mr. Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received March 1.)

(No. 8.)
My Lord, *Jedda, February 6, 1940*

WITH reference to my telegrams Nos. 21, 22 and 23 of the 5th February, I have the honour to report that, on receipt of your Lordship's instructions, I addressed to Ibn Saud two communications, of which copies are enclosed.

2. As immediately after the translation of these letters had been completed the King called for me, I handed them to him in person, explaining that I did not expect any reply until the following day, when he was also receiving me.

3. Ibn Saud, however, preferred to read the letters at once. He read the letter about Dr. Grobba first, and expressed gratification at its terms. He made no immediate reference to the question of guarantee.

4. The letter about arms and a credit was, I fear a bitter disappointment to [illegible] £100,000. My people and my enemies outside my borders will say that that is all I am worth in the eyes of my friends the British." Still, let His Majesty's Government rest assured that even if he did not accept this sum or get the sum he wanted his friendship was unalterable and, however much they might try, no foreign Power could shake his friendship. I thanked him for this further mark of friendship and said that our friendship for him was also so great that, had he felt obliged [illegible] Minister [illegible] H[illegible] would not have allowed their relations to have been affected by his action. Ibn Saud then touched on the question of the danger of his position if the war spread and the need for him to be strong and well prepared. £100,000 would be of no good to him. The point was not so much that he had immediate needs as that he must know and be able to tell his people that there existed funds on which he could draw if the need arose. He then got down to details, and said that what he would like was for a sum of at least £800,000 to be earmarked for his use during the war if and when he needed it. I replied [illegible] His Majesty had seen from my note that I had been authorised not only to offer a credit up to £100,000, but to state that His Majesty's Government would [illegible] the economic position of Saudi Arabia. His present request differed from his original request, and I could only submit it to His Majesty's Government. As I was to have the honour of a further interview on the morrow, we could talk again on this matter. As regards the danger of his position, I said that his best assurance lay in the fact that his interests and ours were identical: we had the same interest in seeing a strong, united and independent Saudi Arabia as he had.

5. He then touched briefly on his relations with Iraq and Koweit, and suggested that his Ministers, Sheikh Yusuf Yasin and Sheikh Hafez Wahba, might, if I agreed, conveniently call on me and try to reach an understanding on

the outstanding questions. I agreed and, as the time for prayer was approaching, withdrew.

6. Before leaving the palace I asked Sheikh Hafez Wahba to call on me in the afternoon and discuss the matter of credit, on which by then the King might have expressed further views in private. I wished to discuss before my next interview whether Ibn Saud had any intention of suggesting security for the much larger loan for which he was now asking.

7. Hafez Wahba duly called, and I asked him whether, in his opinion, the King would persist in his rejection of the offer of £100,000 credit for purchase of food-stuffs in India. Hafez Wahba said yes. Ibn Saud was very sad. The sum he had received would be compared with the very large sum loaned to Turkey, and he would lose face in the eyes of his own people and his enemies alike. I explained that no possible comparison could be drawn between the two transactions. The loan to Turkey was a business transaction entered into because the exigencies of the moment and considerations of self-defence demanded it. The loan to Ibn Saud was the loan of one friend to another who was temporarily short of cash. No guarantee had been asked, and questions of repayment, &c., were treated as of secondary importance, to be settled later. I thought that the King ought to feel very pleased that within ten days of his asking for temporary assistance £100,000 was offered. Sheikh Hafez knew that finances were not conducted in the United Kingdom as they were here. The Secretary of State could not, as could the King when he wanted to offer a present or a loan, dip his hand into a box and produce the sovereigns. Revenue in England was contributed by the tax payer, who had an uncomfortable habit of wanting to know how his contribution was spent. I hoped that Sheikh Hafez would be able to make the King realise that the production, almost at a moment's notice, of so large a sum was in itself a remarkable proof of His Majesty's Government's readiness to help. He and the King could interpret my note. It seemed to me that it meant that £100,000 was the immediate response, and that more might be hoped for later if there was any real need for it. I hoped the King would not refuse it. Sheikh Hafez said that the King could see the soothing references in the Arab press: "Ibn Saud bought by the British for £100,000." I replied that it was ridiculous, anyhow, to talk about "buying," as Ibn Saud was known to be on our side. Yes, said Hafez Wahba, but the Germans were prepared to pay £400,000 to have him on their side, or so Khalid al Hud had told him. What the King wanted was a credit for £800,000 to be open for the duration of the war and to be used as and when required, repayment to be made after the war. It was not so much that he had immediate need of this sum, but he wanted to be able to tell his people that his friendship with Great Britain had resulted in his having something to fall back upon in time of need. Pilgrimage receipts this year were bad; next year they would be worse, and he did not want to have to be perpetually coming to us, "like a Bedawi with his hand out," asking for small sums.

8. I told Hafez that I feared that, if we got up high among the hundred thousands, the transaction might cease to be a transaction among friends, but would become a business transaction. Awkward questions of security for the loan, interest, repayment, &c., would have to be settled in advance. What would be the King's reaction if asked for security? Turkey, whom they were so fond of citing, had exports, raisins, tobacco, &c. I raised this point, as Mr. de Gaury had told me that he thought the King expected a bargain.

9. I asked Hafez Wahba whether he thought the King could be induced to accept the £100,000 if it were placed to his credit freely to use as he liked. I felt that I was justified in the light of paragraph 4 of your telegram No. 10 in making [illegible] by Hafez Wahba. It was [illegible] only the £100,000 food credit but the £85,000 arms credit which, on my own showing, could not, at any rate for the moment, be used for the purchase of arms in Great Britain, should be freed, and that to the resulting free credit of £185,000 £15,000 should be added, making £200,000 in all. It would be understood that the assistance so afforded was for this year's needs, and that it would be open for him to submit for the sympathetic consideration of His Majesty's Government an application for help, if needed, next year. I asked why there should be magic in £200,000 if £100,000 was so derisory a figure in the eyes of the outside world. Hafez Wahba explained that the magic would lie in Ibn Saud's ability to say to his people [illegible] he needed this sum and felt confident that His Majesty's Government would help him, if necessary, next year.

10. Hafez Wahba said that the reason for the King's statement to

Sir R. Bullard that he wished to await the end of the war before purchasing arms was that in view of the publication of the amount of the loan to Turkey he did not want news to get abroad that he was being offered so meagre a credit compared with that given to Turkey. I repeated that it was unreasonable to compare Turkey with Saudi Arabia in this connexion. If we were spending millions in Turkey there was, as I had said, a factor of self-interest. Turkey was for the Allies an outpost, a bulwark against the spread of the area of hostilities. The money was being spent not to help a friend in immediate need but to secure our own defence. The loan could almost be classed as expenditure on coastal defence. One could not conceive that Saudi Arabia would ever be called upon to act as a bulwark against an invader. If it did, against all present hope and belief, come into the war zone then, as I had informed His [illegible] it was of the highest importance to the British Empire that his kingdom should remain strong and independent and its integrity be unimpaired.

11. What, said Hafez Wahba, about a possible threat from Italy? I repeated what I had been authorised to say: namely, that it was unthinkable that Italy would break her agreement with us and risk war for the sake of annexing a portion of territory which could be of little value to her. I added that I had recently spent two years among the Italians in Italian East Africa, and that my personal opinion was that Italy had her hands full and could not afford to launch forth on new adventures. If this war was a tragedy to the rest of the world it was a god-send to Italy, who could hope, if she remained neutral, [illegible] by her adventures in Italian East Africa. Moreover, if Italy wished to keep her empire, it was vitally necessary for her to have unimpeded access to the Red Sea for the purpose of restocking herself not only in petrol and food-stuffs which could perhaps be stored but in man power which needed, owing to the climate, to be constantly renewed. Hafez Wahba thought that this would interest the King and help to allay his apprehensions. I hoped, though I refrained from saying [illegible] for a specific guarantee against aggression.

12. As reported in my telegrams Nos. 21, 22 and 23 I saw the King again on the morning of the 4th February. I spoke first about the question of credit in the terms of my conversation with Sheikh Hafez Wahba, reported in paragraph [illegible] above. The King [illegible] we had spent on King Hussein during the war of 1914–18 and of the part that he, Ibn Saud, had played in the war. His share in the reward was not great but he had been happy to receive it as a present from a friend. He was a very old friend, the Turks were new friends acquired for the needs of the moment. Ibn Saud's point is, I gathered from this conversation and from my talks with Mr. de Gaury, that in time of war the potential enemy gets the money and the friend whose loyalty and co-operation are assured gets an expression of gratitude. He said that if he were to remain strong in his own country, as His Majesty's Government wished him to be, he must be generous in his distribution [illegible] to his tribes. As I knew, the revenues of his country were [illegible] even in a good pilgrimage year barely met necessary expenditure. However, as long as he felt that he could rely on His Majesty's Government to afford material assistance if he required it in future years he would like me [illegible] credit for £200,000 to be repaid after the war. He would spend the money on the purchase of food-stuffs and some perhaps on arms which His Majesty's Government might perhaps sanction his buying in the neutral market if they thought [illegible] requirements. I thanked him and said that whatever assistance it would be found possible to give he must not regard the sum as he had appeared to do [illegible] His Majesty's Government's application of his friendship. The value of his friendship could not be reckoned in terms of sovereigns.

13. He then wished me to talk to him about the guarantee of non-aggression for which he had asked. I replied that His Majesty's Government trusted that he would have confidence in them and would not press them for a specific guarantee. I used the arguments with which your Lordship was good enough to supply me and repeated much of what I had said to Hafez Wahba regarding [illegible] The King appeared to be entirely satisfied and Hafez Wahba, whom I saw after the interview, confirmed my impression that he would not press for a specific guarantee.

14. I feel that Ibn Saud by his rejection of Grobba, by his acceptance of a general verbal assurance in lieu of a specific guarantee, and by his readiness to accept a much smaller credit than he felt the safety of his position required, has shown both loyalty and understanding and I sincerely trust that I may be authorised to inform him that His Majesty's Government have agreed to my proposal for a £200,000 credit and a promise of further help if and when required during the period of hostilities.

I have, &c.
F. H. W. STONEHEWER BIRD

Enclosure 1 in No. 29

Mr. Stonehewer-Bird to King 'Abdul 'Aziz

Your Majesty, *Jedda, February 2, 1940*

HIS Excellency Sheikh Hafez Wahba on the 18th January conveyed to me at your Majesty's command an acknowledgment of my letter of the 17th January regarding Dr. Grobba and at the same time requested me to communicate to the Government in the United Kingdom your Majesty's views on this matter. On the 21st January Sheikh Hafez informed me that permission was not being granted to Dr. Grobba to return.

I am authorised to inform your Majesty that the Government in the United Kingdom have learnt with interest of your attitude to Dr. Grobba's visit and applaud the resolution with which your Majesty has acted. They feel that having taken this stand it is necessary for your Majesty's dignity and from every point of view that you should abide by it. They are convinced that you need [illegible] that Italy would break the Middle East Agreement and risk war with Great Britain for the sake of German representation in Saudi Arabia. The Government in the United Kingdom have always tried to advise your Majesty in your own best interests. In this case the advice was based on the sincere belief that the misunderstandings to which the reception of a diplomat of Dr. Grobba's reputation would give rise and to the offensive which he might attempt would be as embarrassing and dangerous for your Majesty as for the Government in the United Kingdom. [illegible] might have serious consequences they would certainly have warned your Majesty. If, nevertheless, your Majesty feels that Italian retaliation is possible they invite your [illegible] to your Majesty on the 23rd March(*) and also paragraph 2 of Sir Reader Bullard's letter of the 30th April. The Government feel that these two messages will show that they regard your Majesty's interests as their own.

I have, &c.
F. H. W. STONEHEWER BIRD

Enclosure 2 in No. 29

Mr. Stonehewer-Bird to King 'Abdul 'Aziz

Your Majesty, *Jedda, February 2, 1940*

IN [illegible] of Dr. Grobba's reception, on which I have addressed [illegible] to your Majesty [illegible] Excellency Sheikh Hafez Wahba [illegible] your Majesty wished to learn the views of the Government in the United Kingdom.

I duly communicated with the Government [illegible] have now received their reply.

I am able to assure your Majesty that the Government in the United Kingdom [illegible] your Majesty's [illegible]. They fully realise the difficulties which have beset your path in recent years. For your numerous marks of friendship they are and will always be grateful.

(*) "Further Correspondence respecting Eastern Affairs," No. 16, Part XLIV.

Your Majesty will understand the difficulties which now face the Government in the United Kingdom. They are studying the possibility of supplying arms and ammunition but regret that they cannot hold out very strong hope that they will be able for the present to meet your Majesty's request in this matter.

On the other hand, I am happy to be able to inform your Majesty that the Government in the United Kingdom are prepared to meet bills for food-stuffs purchased in India up to £100,000 sterling. Details regarding charges, &c., and arrangements for repayment can be settled later. Meanwhile the existing offer of credit for £85,000 for purchase of arms remains open.

I am to add that His Majesty's Government will always consider [illegible] In this connexion it will be appreciated that while the resources of His Majesty's Government may appear considerable the demands on these resources are enormous.

I have, &c.
F. H. W. STONEHEWER BIRD

E 947/207/25] No. 30

Mr. Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received March 1.)

(No. 11.)
My Lord, *Jedda, February 7, 1940*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that M. Ali Akbar Bahman, Iranian Ambassador to Egypt, presented his letters of credence as Iranian Minister to Saudi Arabia to His Majesty King Abdul Aziz at Jedda on the 30th January last. Neither he nor the King made any speech.

2. I am forwarding copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassador at Cairo and to His Majesty's Minister at Tehran.

I have, &c.
F. H. W. STONEHEWER BIRD

E 396/166/25] No. 31

Viscount Halifax to Mr. Stonehewer-Bird (Jedda).

(No. 19.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, March 4, 1940.*

Your Despatch No. [illegible] of 22nd January. [illegible]

For the reasons given in my telegram No. 224 of [22nd June], 1939, to Baghdad, His Majesty's Government would prefer that these disputes should be settled without their intervention, *e.g.*, by a commission under the presidency of some "neutral" Arab.

2. His Majesty's Government are, however, concerned at the continuance of these disputes, and while anxious not to become involved in anything so formal as a commission with a British president or an official decision about the meaning of instruments like the Protocol of Uqair, they are also anxious not to place any obstacles in the way of a settlement. If, therefore, Ibn Saud is anxious for His Majesty's Government to take a hand, you may (subject to any observations by Mr. [illegible] consent of the Iraqi Government thereto, His Majesty's Government will try to find an officer of suitable seniority who has had experience of Arab countries, but no previous connexion with either Saudi Arabia or Iraq, to act as an unofficial mediator.

3. Arrangement I have in mind is that this officer should study comprehensively all the problems connected with the frontier now separating and separating the two Governments, should visit the frontier and both capitals in an order to be determined by drawing lots, and should thereafter attempt to reconcile the views of the two Governments in friendly discussion.

4. For your own information I realise that the task of selected officer would not be easy and might prove unsuccessful. But adoption of idea might in itself promote a *detente*, and mediator might thereafter be able to prevent tempers of both sides from getting any worse while present crisis lasts.

(Addressed to Jedda, No. 19. Repeated to Bagdad, No. 48, and Cairo, No. 16, Saving.)

E 1036/252/25] No. 32

Mr. Stonehewer-Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received March 6.)

(No. 40.)

[illegible] *Jedda, March 6, 1940.*

MY telegram No. 22 of 5th February.

Minister of Finance asked me a few days ago, on instructions from Ibn Saud, whether I would give him any indication of His Majesty's Government's response to his request for financial assistance. Government w[illegible] food stuffs and were anxious to know how much they [illegible]

2. I replied that the fact that no answer had [illegible] received must be taken as proof that the matter was receiving very full [illegible]

3. May I hope for a reply in the near future? I believe Ibn Saud's need to be genuine and urgent, as pilgrimage receipts amounted to less than half the sum the Government had counted upon.

E 1039/252/25 No. 33

Viscount Halifax to Mr. Stonehewer-Bird (Jedda).

(No. 20.)

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, March 7, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 23 [of 5th February: Credits for Ibn Saud].

His Majesty's Government agree to put at Ibn Saud's [illegible] of £200,000, including (*i.e., not* in addition to) the £85,000 already [illegible] purchase of arms. They do not wish to put any restrictions on the use which is made of this sum, but, owing to the need of conserving their own exchange resources, they regret they are not able to offer him any of it in free sterling. It will therefore be necessary for Ibn Saud to make his purchases within the sterling area.

2. If Ibn Saud so desires His Majesty's Government will arrange that he should take part of the credit [illegible] riyals, to be manufactured in this country, with an overriding maximum of 1 million riyals. Owing to fluctuations in the price [illegible] silver, it is not possible to give the exact cost of these riyals, but it would be in [illegible] to let them go at cost without attempting to levy seigniorage.

3. Alternatively, there would be no objection to Ibn Saud taking part of credit in Maria Theresa dollars obtained for sterling from India, provided Indian authorities agreed (though he would presumably be reluctant to do so).

4. These arrangements would enable Ibn Saud to make purchases of food, for example, in India or in African colonies, thereby releasing for other purposes equivalent sums of money within his own disposition, while at same time supplying him with a certain amount of money in form of ready cash for internal expenditure.

5. Please put these suggestions to Ibn Saud in whatever form you think best. If he accepts offer and will inform me how he would like to use the money, the necessary details will be worked out here.

6. His Majesty's Government can make no promise now regarding possible [illegible] from Ibn Saud based on his financial requirements. You should not say more [illegible] and ever-increasing burdens which this country is already bearing.

E 1076/166/25] No. 34

Mr. Houstoun Boswall to Viscount Halifax.—(Received March 8.)

(No. 77.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, March 7, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 19 to Jedda.

Hafiz Wahba called on me on 6th March and said that he had authorised the discussion of outstanding questions if the initiative was taken by the Iraqi Government, and that he was ready to defer his departure for that purpose. I sent the message to this effect to the Prime Minister, who was gratified, and to-day, when I returned his visit, Hafiz Wahba, thanking me for my action, said he had already decided to postpone his [! onward] journey for as long as a fortnight, if necessary.

Both Saudi Ministers, the oriental secretary and I lunched with the Prime Minister and some members of the Government to-day. The atmosphere was cordial enough, so I hope the necessity for the procedure envisaged in the second paragraph of your telegram under reference may not arise.

(Repeated to Jedda, No. 6, and Cairo, No. 6, Saving (by bag).)

E 1145/166/25] No. 35

Mr. Stonehewer-Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received March 14.)

(No. 15.)

My Lord, *Jedda, February 16, 1940.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 28 of the 15th February, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith translations of the two notes handed to me by Sheikh Yusuf Yasin at Ibn Saud's command.

2. As reported in my despatch No. 8 of the 6th February, Ibn Saud did not discuss Iraq relations with me in the course of my interviews. He left it to Sheikh Yusuf Yasin to explain the position to me.

3. Sheikh Yusuf, when he called on me, commenced by complaining that [illegible] from His Majesty's Government or His Majesty's [illegible] to the various complaints which Mr. de Gaury had been [illegible] since I knew him twelve years ago, was reasonably affable, but was disinclined to forgo his afternoon siesta in the interest of better Saudi Iraqi relations. He found an easy way out by handing me copies of the notes, in which he said I should find the Saudi Arabian viewpoint very clearly set out.

5. The note from the Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs suggests certain amendments in the agreement relating to grazing and watering places and in the [illegible] not able to ratify these instruments in their present form as they run counter in certain points to existing Iraqi legislation.

6. The reply from the Saudi Minister in Bagdad is without doubt from the over-sharp pen of Yusuf Yasin. The note alleges that the Iraqi Government have been guilty of breaches of the three treaties hitherto signed, Mohamerah, Bahra and the Treaty of Friendship and "Bon Voisinage" of 1931, in that—

(*a*) They have allowed the Nejd Shammar to reside in Iraq instead of returning them to Nejd (Treaty of Mohamerah).

(*b*) They did not try to prevent the Nejd Shammar from migrating to Iraq (Treaty of Bahra).

(*c*) They have distributed presents contrary to the stipulations of the Bahra Agreement.

(*d*) They have failed to take security from the Shammar after raids and have executed none of the penalties laid down in the Bahra Agreement.

(*e*) They have not tried to prevent Iraqi territory from being used as a base for raids in Saudi Arabia.

7. The Saudi Government suggests either of the three following alternatives as affording a solution:—

(1) The Tribal Nationalities Treaty should be ratified, as signed, without any modification.

(2) The Mohamerah Agreement should be enforced and the Nejd Shammar returned to Nejd.

(3) If the Iraqi Government do not wish to enforce the Treaty of Mohamerah, the Nejd Shammar should be removed to a place beyond the frontiers.

8. If one or other of these alternatives cannot be accepted, the Saudi Government will be obliged to enlighten Iraqi opinion as to the true position by [illegible]

[illegible] Yusuf Yasin's conversation that the real trouble lay [illegible] as in the fact that Nuri Pasha was [illegible] and treat[illegible] exchanged between [illegible] pressure and ensure ratification [illegible] (I think an unprecedented experience for Ibn Saud) he takes very ill [illegible] sure point is, as appears from paragraph 1 of the Saudi note, the amount of loot acquired by the Nejd Shammar and for which no compensation has been paid.

11. I was glad to learn on the day following my conversation with Sheikh Yusuf Yasin that Hafez Wahba might be sent by Ibn Saud to Bagdad to try and settle this vexed question on the spot. These matters, as I told Sheikh Hafez, appear to be more suitable for settlement between the two Governments than for decision by His Majesty's Government.

12. I am forwarding copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassadors at Bagdad and Cairo, to his Excellency the High Commissioner for Palestine and to the Honourable the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.

I have, &c.

F. H. W. STONEHEWER BIRD.

Enclosure 1 in No. 35.

Translation of Copy of a Note sent from the Saudi Legation in Bagdad to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq.

In the name of God the Most Merciful, the Compassionate.

Dear Minister, 26.11.1358 (*January* 6, 1940).

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge receipt of your Excellency's secret note of the 27th December, 1939, and, on instructions from my Government, I submit the following to your Excellency:—

1. Before replying to that note, I am glad to refer to the allusion made in your letter regarding the high spirit shown in the speeches of the members of the Iraqi Parliament emphasising the good relations existing between Iraq and the Saudi Arabian Kingdom, and the statement you made to [illegible] may be sure of the sincere friendship which Iraq bears for the Saudi Arabian Kingdom and the true desire of Iraq for everything that may promote brotherly and friendly relations between the two kingdoms. I wish your Excellency and the Iraq Government to be assured that the Saudi Arabian authorities firmly believe that all the people of Iraq wish them nothing but good, and that they have the most benevolent feelings towards them that a nation can have towards a neighbouring nation, more especially because of the unity of the two brother nations in race, history and devotion to the high Arab cause. I believe that you

all confidently believe that the Arab people in the Saudi Arabian Kingdom, and at their head His Majesty King Abdul Aziz, have the same feelings towards their brothers the Iraqi people. This must have been confirmed to your Excellency during your recent visit to Riyadh, when you were received by His Majesty the [illegible] its people with the greatest possible enthusiasm.

While mentioning this to your Excellency, I would add that I firmly believe that there is no one among the people of Iraq who would willingly see the interests and peace of Saudi Arabia prejudiced at the hands of any Ir[illegible] whoever he might be, or who would approve of a party of Shammar tribesmen committing a crime in their original territory and then migrating to Iraq and establishing themselves in the frontier regions for the purpose of plundering [illegible] so much love and benevolence. These criminals of Shammar who have settled on the frontiers, without a single exception, were not led by any national or political motive to leave their original home, neither were they compelled to go out by oppression or the attacks of enemies. Here in their own country are their friends and kinsmen, enjoying a full share of comfort, tranquillity and good [illegible] country could not possibly allow them to make raids against Iraq or to cause disturbance on the frontier. They went to Iraq in order to be able to continue their crimes. They attained their desire and lived under the protection of the Iraq Government and continued their disturbances and wrong doing. The survey [illegible] Foreign Affairs. It amounted to 708 camels, 20 (? loads of goods), 1[illegible] 13 rifles, 11 pounds and 570 riyals. This is what was stolen in the last two years only. I am sure that no Iraqi would approve of such a state being allowed to continue between Iraq and the Saudi Arabian Kingdom even if there were no treaties between the two parties to prevent such occurrences, but how much less [illegible] the provisions of the treaties clearly prohibit such actions in e[illegible]

2. Before I explain the views of my Government on y[illegible] statement that certain points of Iraqi legislation prevent the ratifi[illegible] treaty concerning tribal nationality and the agreement concerning [illegible] pasture and watering places in the form in which they were drafted and signed in Bagdad by the Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs and the representa[illegible] verbatim quotations from the previous treaties between the two Governments so that your Excellency may give them the consideration which they deserve as written and effective obligations with whose provisions local legislation should not be allowed to conflict:—

[illegible] (b), [illegible] 7th Ramadhan, 1340, corresponding to the 5th March, 1922, that is, soon after the Iraq Government was formed and shortly before the present regulations and legislation of Iraq had been drawn up, states:—

> "In accordance with the exception taken by the Government of Nejd to the frontiers claimed by the representative of the Iraq Government, it has been decided that, in view of the tribal decision, Al Muntafik, Al Zafir and Al Emarat shall go back to Iraq and the Nejd Shammar to Nejd," &c.

Now [illegible] ck the Nejd Shammar to Nejd? If they are prepared to do so, the question will be considered closed.

(*b*) Article 4 of the Bahra Treaty concluded in Rabi-ath Thani 1344, corresponding to November 1325 [*sic*] (? 1925), states:—

> "The Governments of Nejd and Iraq undertake to prevent any tribe or sub-tribe migrating from one country to the other by all means in their power other than eviction or the using of force unless such migration takes place with the knowledge and consent of their Government.
>
> "The two Governments undertake to refrain from offering presents of any kind whatsoever to refugees from the territories of the other Government and to look with disfavour on any one of their subjects who may endeavour to attract the tribes to the other Government or to encourage them to move from their own country to the other."

Here I would draw your Excellency's attention to the history of the residence of these criminals of Shammar (in Iraq) and ask whether the Iraq [illegible] have executed this article in respect to them. If you refer to the notes [illegible] legation dated [illegible] N. [illegible] and dates of notes [illegible] the legation when presents were distributed amongst Shammar and other previous notes regarding crimes reported in the time of Muhammad Id should be given). [illegible] will find that the Iraq Government [illegible] to the activities of these criminals of Shammar who took refuge in Iraq, that they granted them allowances, gave them assistance and permitted them to live as trouble-makers in the land.

(c) Article 9 of the Bahra Treaty states.—

"Should a tribe move from the territories of one Government to the territories of the other Government and then make a raid after its migration against the territory in which it used to live, the Government in whose territories the tribe lives shall have the right to take from it a sufficient security, so that in case such an attack is repeated the said security shall be forfeit. This is in addition to the punishment provided for in article 1 and in addition to what may be imposed by the court which is provided for in article 2 of this agreement.

Have the Iraq Government done anything of this sort with the Nejd Shammar who took refuge in Iraq? No. And I believe your Excellency will agree with me in that.

(d) Article 3 of the Treaty of Friendship and "Bon Voisinage" concluded on the 20th Dhu'l Qada, 1349, corresponding to the 7th April, 1931, and signed by his Excellency the present Iraq Prime Minister, Seyed Nuri-as-Said, states.—

"Each of the two parties undertakes to maintain good relations with the other party and to endeavour by all means in its power to prevent its territories being used as a base for illegal activities or preparations therefor including raiding, directed against the peace and security of the territories of the other party."

These criminals of Shammar, without any exception, have adopted the Iraqi frontiers as a base for their criminal operations day and night. Do you think that such action on their part and the omission of the Iraqi Government to do anything about it is in agreement with this explicit article?

3. The Saudi Arabian Government have asked, and are still asking, for the execution of these treaty articles, and they, for their part, cannot accept as an excuse for non-execution the allegation that the said treaties are contrary to local legislation [illegible] with written and ratified obligations, as, after they have been ratified, such obligations are considered to be part of the State's laws.

4. The Saudi Arabian Government have overlooked the Iraqi Government's neglect to execute their obligations as mentioned above, being desirous to have those obligations executed in an amicable way. But, seeing that the article concerning Shammar in the Treaty of Muhammara has now been left unexecuted for about eighteen years, and seeing that the Iraqi Government offer various excuses for not executing it, the Government think it better for the easing of the situation to settle the difficulty of Shammar by giving them the opportunity to remain in Iraq, if they so desired, on the condition that they are prevented from causing harm to their original home. This condition could only be achieved by removing them all, without exception, from the frontier and placing them beyond the Euphrates or to a place as far from the frontiers as the Euphrates is. For the sake of this, the Saudi Arabian Government have shown themselves willing to renounce their claim to consider these people as their subjects, but, if they are not removed from the frontiers in accordance with the provisions of the latest agreement concerning tribal nationalities, the Saudi Arabian Government cannot renounce their claim to them, and demand the execution of the provisions of the agreements concerning them.

5. It is for the Iraqi Government to say that such and such thing agrees with the local legislation and that such and such thing disagrees with it, but the Saudi Arabian Government say that they have concluded ratified and effective

treaties and a tribal nationality treaty with the Iraq Government, and in consequence the position as they see it is as follows:

(1) Either the tribal nationalities treaty should be ratified as it was signed without any modification, and fully executed as it stands; or
(2) That a return should be made to the Treaty of Muhammara and the Nejd Shammar should be returned to Nejd.
(3) Or, if the Iraq Government do not wish to execute the Treaty of Muhammara, the least the Saudi Arabian Government can possibly accept is that Nejd Shammar should be removed from the frontiers to a place beyond the Euphrates.

If none of these suggestions is carried out, the Saudi Arabian Government must say with regret that the Iraqi Government insist on breaking their promises, [illegible] Iraq people in particular with the irregular attitude which the Iraq [illegible]

6. As to the modification your Excellency suggested in article 4 of the agreement concerning the regulation of grazing matters, I do not know what there is in this article, as signed, which conflicts with Iraqi legislation. It seems to me that the Iraqi Government have deleted from the article the reference to—

(a) The coming of an official from the one country to meet the corresponding official on the other side. This is provided for in the Agreement of Friendship and "Bon Voisinage" and cannot be contrary to local legislation.
(b) Service of the Government's summons on their subjects. This is provided for in article 3 of the Treaty of Bahra, whereby either Government may summon their subjects residing in territories of the other State to serve in armed expeditions. This proves that the summons [illegible] permissible, and, as the summons cannot be served except through a [illegible] person, it was provided in the grazing agreement that the summons should be served by and in the presence of proper officials on the other side.
(c) The endeavour of the one Government by all means in their power to induce nationals (of the other Government) to comply with the summons of their Government.

Is it contrary to Iraqi law for the Iraqi Government to say to a party or a group of the subjects of the Saudi Arabian Kingdom residing in Iraqi territory "Your Government summons you, obey the summons"? And is it contrary to Iraqi law to induce them to return to their original home in special circumstances?

This article is the essence of the agreement concerning pasture. The object of it is to create a spirit of co-operation between the two countries and to cause it to be known to the subjects of both parties that the two Governments are in agreement about everything that is in the interests and to the advantage both of themselves and their subjects. Is such co-operation contrary to Iraqi law?

I request [illegible] applied [illegible] agreements with which local legislation cannot conflict, and that [the phrase omitted] co-operation between the two countries is the object of the two parties.

As to the ratification of the agreement concerning the administration of the neutral area, my Government are prepared to ratify it.

With highest respects,

Enclosure 2 in No. 35.

Translation of a Note sent by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Bagdad, to the Saudi Minister in Bagdad.

(Secret.)

Dear Minister,

Bagdad, December 27, 1939

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that the Iraqi Gover[illegible] laid the following agreements before the Parliament in its last meeting —

(1) The agreement concerning administration of the neutral zone.
(2) The agreement concerning the [illegible] ing and watering places.
(3) The treaty concerning the nationality of tribes.

The Government recommended the Parliament to ratify them in order th[illegible] they may be able to fulfil th[illegible] of the said agreements. The Par[illegible] ment ratified agreement (1) concerning the administration of the neutral zone.

I shall therefore be glad to learn whether it will be possible to have the instruments of ratification exchanged in Bagdad or in any other place which the Saudi Arabian Kingdom approves.

As regards the two agreements (2 and 3) referred to above, I much regret to [illegible] hat the Parliament had made some observations on article 4 of each one of them, and that the contents of the said two articles do not agree with Iraqi legislation. In the course of th[illegible] two sister countries, and requested that a decision in the question of the two agreements be postponed until both G[illegible] Iraqi legislation in force.

I believe, your Excellency, that the Saudi Arabian authorities will welcome any suggestion which will remove the difficulties which face the Iraqi Government in a constitutional question such as this, and which will lead to a settlement of these outstanding questions which [illegible] may be easily overcome given the brotherly relations existing between the two countries and the goodwill which each party [illegible] To that end I would make the following suggestions —

1. As regards the agreement concerning grazing matters—

(*a*) Deletion of the last five lines of article 4, which will then read as follows —

> "Should one of the high contracting parties desire to collect Government taxes from its tribes residing in the territories of the other high contracting party, the proper authorities specified in article 8 of the Treaty of Friendship and "Bon Voisinage" shall communicate with each other with a view to notifying the said tribes of that desire."

(*b*) It would also be suitable to delete the word "animals" which appears in line 5 of article 1, because the Iraqi Government do not collect taxes on these animals.

2. As regards the treaty concerning tribal nationalities, article 4, relating to individuals who have acquired the nationality of the Government in whose territories they reside, should be drafted on the principle that any person whose residence in the frontier district may be inconsistent with the interest of either of the two Governments shall be removed from those districts. It is believed that the following form secures the said point of view and article 4 will thus read as follows —

> "The two Governments undertake not to allow any one of the persons whose nationality has been changed in accordance with articles 1 and 2 of this treaty to reside in any district where it may be feared that his so doing will cause difficulties to the other Government."

I wish to enclose two other drafts for article 4, and I request that they may be considered in comparison with the first draft.

In view of the sincere friendship which, as your Excellency has been able to ascertain, Iraq feels for the Saudi Arabian Kingdom, and its earnest desire to do everything to promote brotherly and friendly relations between the two kingdoms, I have strong hopes that the Saudi Arabian authorities will appreciate the truth of the explanation I have given in my present letter, and that thus the [illegible] parties in this matter. I trust that your Excellency will communicate the result to me as soon as possible.

Article 4. Draft No. 2.

Any individual of the tribes whose nationality has been changed in accordance with the provisions of articles 1 and 2 of this treaty and whose residence in the neighbourhood of the frontiers of the two kingdoms may, it is [illegible] to crimes and disturbances, shall be removed to a distance so far from [illegible] tiers that he cannot cause difficulties to the other Government or carry [illegible]

Article 4. Draft No. 3.

[illegible] that the residence in the neighbourhood of the [illegible] of any one of the individuals whose nationality has been changed in accordance with the provisions of articles 1 and 2 of this treaty is a cause of [illegible] its frontier areas, he shall be obliged to reside in some place so far from the frontier that he cannot carry out any action of the sort mentioned.

E 1166/252/25] No. 36

Mr. Stonehewer-Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received March 14.)

(No. 44.)

(Telegraphic.)

Jedda, March 14, 1940

YOUR telegram No. 20.

1. I communicated to Ibn Saud the terms of His Majesty's Government's offer through the acting Minister for Foreign Affairs.

2. Minister of Finance called yesterday and expressed Ibn Saud's apprecia- [illegible] of his urgent requirements and approximate cost: Rice, 60,000 bags, costing £50,000, sugar, 300 tons, costing £5,000; coffee, 200 tons, costing £10,000; cardamoms, 300 bags, costing £8,000, tea, 500 cases, costing £4,000.

3. In addition to above, which he is accustomed to purchase in India, he wants 3,000 tons of cement, costing about £11,000, 600 tons of iron rods for reinforced concrete, at about £12,000, and 1,000 tons of wood for construction value about £15,000, the cement from Egypt, the wood from Singapore, the rods from India or Egypt.

4. He is very grateful for the offer of 1 million riyals at cost price. Minister of Finance said that Ibn Saud would like 1½ million if at all possible. I replied I would mention this, but that my instructions said plainly a maximum of 1 million, as you assumed he does not wish to have Maria Theresa dollars.

5. After sums have been placed to his credit in India, Singapore and, if possible, Egypt to meet the requirements detailed above and cost of riyals has [illegible] £200,000 placed to his credit in India or Egypt to meet further requirements, *e.g.*, spare parts for motor cars and plant, electrical equipment, &c., of which he could not give exact details.

6. Ibn Saud asked that necessary credits might be opened as soon as possible, as he had delayed making his usual purchases this year and feared not only scarcity in his kingdom but [illegible]

7. [illegible] exactly as set forth in paragraph 6 of your telegram. The Minister of Finance stated on Ibn Saud's instructions that he quite understood, but felt confident that if he were in real need the friendship of the Government would come to his assistance.

E 1143 207 25 No. 37

Mr Stonehewer-Bird to Viscount Halifax—(Received March 14)

(No. 13)
My Lord, *Jedda, February 13, 1940*

I HAVE the honour to report that Mr (Judge) Bert Fish, American Minister in Egypt, presented his letters of credence as American Minister to Saudi Arabia to His Majesty King Abdul Aziz on the 4th February Neither he nor the King made a speech.

2 I am forwarding copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassadors at Washington and Cairo

I have, &c
F H W STONEHEWER BIRD

E 1197 166 25 No. 38

Mr Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax—(Received March 16)

(No. 47)
(Telegraphic.) *Jedda, March 16, 1940*

YOUR telegram No. 19 and Bagdad telegram No. 77

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs read to me yesterday a message from Ibn Saud, in which he stated that Hafiz Wahba had been unable to reach agreement with Iraqi Minister. In these circumstances, and as rumours were circulating as to the causes of disagreement between the two countries, he wished to publish all documents and correspondence concerning Iraqi Saudi relations, and to issue a proclamation explaining to the Arabic world his reasons for publication. The proclamation which Abdullah Suleiman read to me, and of which I am sending full translation by bag, expresses the fervent wish of Saudi Arabian Government and people for a settlement of all differences with their brother Arabs of Iraq, whose prosperity and security they sincerely desire. That this feeling is reciprocated by the majority in Iraq was shown by the success of [illegible] mission which visited Riyadh last year under the presidency of the then Minister for Foreign Affairs. Unfortunately, the execution of the agreement [illegible] of sincerity and friendship had become clouded The present position is due to a small number of persons who give no thought to the general Arabic interest As the continuance of this state of affairs is harmful not only to the two countries but to the Arabian world, it is best to set forth the whole truth

2. Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs said that Ibn Saud, before publishing the documents or issuing the proclamation, wished to consult me and His Majesty's Government. I thanked him and said that, whilst I would, of course, immediately seek your instruction, my own view, since the King had been good enough to ask for it, was that he should not publish documents or issue the proclamation I did not think publication would have the desired effect, and would probably merely cause bad blood. (I did not add that it might cause grave inconvenience to His Majesty's Government by causing a political crisis, as I gathered from Mr de Gaury that personal correspondence between Ibn Saud and Nuri Pasha showed the latter in a very unfavourable light) Although I have not yet received newspaper observations, I felt it better at this stage to refer Ibn Saud's proposal to submit the differences to a commission (please see my telegram No. 19). I merely said that His Majesty's Government were not averse to the idea, but would prefer to warn Arab President. If I had not until now made a communication to Ibn Saud on this matter, it was because I had learnt [illegible] of the commission unnecessary. In the present circumstances, I hoped His Majesty would explore this method of reaching a settlement. If it proved [illegible] Minister for Foreign Affairs promised to make a communication on these lines to Ibn Saud, explaining that this was my personal view expressly subject to your Lordship's instructions. I trust that in mentioning your attitude towards

[illegible] I have not exceeded my instructions. It appeared to me highly important to take Ibn Saud's mind off publication of documents which Sir B. Newton states in his telegram would make mischief

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 19 (for Middle East Intelligence Centre); Bagdad, No. 18; and Saving to Jerusalem, No. 7, and Bushire, No. 3.)

E 1198 166 25] No. 39.

Mr. Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received March 16)

(No 48)
(Telegraphic.) *Jedda, March 16, 1940*

MY immediately preceding telegram.

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs told me at the end of interview that Ibn Saud's intention to publish documents, subject to His Majesty's Government's views, had been strengthened by the news of arrest by Iraqi police beyond Ruf[group undecypherable] of sixty Saudi camelmen and their animals about twenty days ago. He had however, waited to take action pending issue of Hafiz Wahba's conversations. There had also been recently raids by Nejd tribesmen living in Iraq

(Repeated to Bagdad, No. 19 of 16th March)

E 1193 166 25] No. 40

Mr Houstoun-Boswall to Viscount Halifax—(Received March 16)

(No 85)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, March 15, 1940*

MY telegram No. 77.

Najdi Shammar have become central point of negotiations. Ibn Saud insists on their removal to Northern Jezireh or their expulsion to Nejd. Prime Minister maintains that first course is impracticable on account of large number of tents involved, and that second would be shameful violation of Arab tradition He proposed meeting of Ibn Saud and Regent, and asked me to support it. I said [illegible] meeting chance of success. Ibn Saud telegraphed that, though he would welcome meeting as demonstration of friendship and goodwill, he would like position to be further clarified before it took place.

To-day, Hafiz Wahba tells me that Prime Minister has asked him to telegraph memorandum to Ibn Saud stating that, if the reason of King's demand for removal of Shammar is their depredations in Saudi territory, he will take steps to put an end to these outrages by tightening control in southern desert area, and that if Ibn Saud will name chieftains whose behaviour has been particularly obnoxious, he will also endeavour to give him satisfaction on this point.

Hafiz Wahba considers that these proposals are useless, but I urged him to advise Ibn Saud to take Prime Minister at his word as a test of good faith

Saudi Arabia could, I said, properly demand that depredations should cease, but it was Iraq's responsibility to decide what measures should be taken to satisfy this demand

Hafiz Wahba said he would telegraph advice to Ibn Saud in this sense.

I shall be grateful for any action His Majesty's Minister can see his way to take to induce Ibn Saud, who is evidently exasperated, and perhaps with justification [illegible] Prime Minister now gives the King an opportunity

(Repeated to Jedda, No. 7)

[E 1193/166/25] No. 41

Viscount Halifax to Mr. Stonehewer-Bird (Jedda)

(No. 24.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, March 16, 1940*

BAGDAD telegram [illegible] 5th March. [Saudi-Iraq relations.]

If you see no objection [illegible] do what you can on lines suggested by His Majesty's Ambassador.

(Addressed to Jedda, No. 24. Repeated to Bagdad, No. 64.)

[E 1200/804/93] No. 42

Mr. Houstoun-Boswall to Viscount Halifax. (Received March 17.)

[By Bag[illegible]]

(No. 22. Saving.)
(Telegraphic.) *En clair.* *Bagdad, March [illegible] 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 38 of 28th February. [Iraqi Mission to the Yemen.]

I raised this subject informally with the Italian Minister when we met at a reception the other day. He had read in the press all about the composition and despatch of the mission, and said that the project had been mentioned in a Bari broadcast. He seemed to be amused at the idea of the Iraqi army attempting to teach others, however backward.

[E 1262/166/25] No. 43

Mr. Stonehewer-Bird to Viscount Halifax. (Received March 18.)

(No. 50.)
[Telegraphic.] *Jedda, March 18, 1940.*

MY telegram No. 47 and telegram No. 24.

The Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs called to-day and informed me that [illegible] publication. The King still felt it would serve a useful purpose if he published at least some of the documents, but would await His Majesty's Government's views.

2. I took the opportunity of asking the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs to give Ibn Saud a message on the lines suggested in Bagdad telegram No. 85. I said His Majesty's Government hoped that the King would see his way to following Hafiz Wahba's advice to accept Nuri Pasha's undertaking to take steps to stop the [illegible] cession of these depredations, and Iraq was responsible for stopping them. Nuri Pasha had found a solution which he felt would have the desired effect, and Ibn Saud would, I hoped, trust him. I did not mention the Iraqi Prime Minister's view, that it was impossible either to [? restrain] or [? overwhelm] Nejd Shammar, as Ibn Saud would [two groups undecypherable] have invoked article 1 of the Treaty of Muhammerah, which they cannot [? unless they] return [? group omitted].

3. I entirely agreed that a meeting between Ibn Saud and the Regent is undesirable until the ground has been properly cleared. The Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs appeared to [illegible] but told me that Ibn Saud had turned down a suggestion that Nuri Pasha should visit him (please see paragraph 10 of my despatch No. 19), as he did not think it would be [illegible] been reached. Ibn Saud has better [illegible] strengthening reached after personal contact with the Iraqi statesman.

4. While I [illegible] Nuri Pasha [illegible] Hafiz Wahba's doubt as to the success of the *démarche*. Depredations are perhaps the sorest point, but, as will be seen from enclosures to my despatch No. 15, there are others arising out of the presence of Nejd Shammar. Could not the Iraqi

Government be induced to remove at least a proportion of the tribe? My Iraqi colleague, as reported in my despatch No. 19, thought it possible, if sufficient inducements were held out, to move the whole tribe, and urged this as a solution. Nuri Pasha is, after all, now merely offering to [group undecypherable], which it is the strict duty of any Government to take.

(Repeated to Bagdad No. 20; and Saving to Cairo, No. 12 (for Middle East Intelligence Centre); Bushire, No. 4; and Jerusalem, No. 8.)

[E 1226/166/25] No. 44

Mr. Houstoun-Boswall to Viscount Halifax. (Received March 18.)

(No. 88.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, March 17, 1940.*

MY telegram No. 85.

On the evening of 15th March the Prime Minister and Hafiz Wahba had a long conversation alone and [two groups undecypherable] a long way in reaching [illegible] excuse to return home and see for himself. He had found King Abdul Aziz torn [illegible] Hafiz Wahba support for his own view.

This conversation, too, made it clear that the Nejd Shammar trouble was being exaggerated by hostile elements around King in order to embitter relations in the hope of embarrassing His Majesty's Government, and among those unfavourable to Allied [? objective] was the present Saudi Arabian Minister here. That was why, until private interview could be arranged, Hafiz Wahba had had to appear to treat Nuri Pasha with suspicion.

Message concluded with expression of hope that I would now support the idea of meeting between the King and the Regent, from which desired improvement of atmosphere might be expected.

When I saw Prime Minister in another connexion a little later he repeated what Mr. Edmonds had told me. Assuring him of any assistance I could properly give to facilitate liquidation of misunderstandings, I left him in order to keep an appointment with Hafiz Wahba and the Saudi Arabian Minister, who had asked me to receive them. At this interview Wahba said that, as a result of his further reports, King Abdul Aziz [? had] [? stated] [? that he] was now prepared to consider replying to Nuri Pasha's questions (in connexion with the nature of the complaints and the identity of the leaders involved) regarding Shammar. I congratulated his Excellency on having got so far in bridging the gulf, and asked him whether he thought the moment ripe for the meeting [illegible] for Nuri Pasha himself to visit the King and so clear the atmosphere.

Meantime, I had some conversation with the Regent at the races, and found that, whilst he would in the last resort meet Abdul Aziz, he did not relish the [illegible] who, he said, had done much harm to the Hashimi family. This talk made my mind up that but little good could come from any heads of States meeting.

Yesterday evening the oriental secretary and I, at their suggestion, met the Prime Minister and Hafiz Wahba at the latter's [? hotel]. Nuri Pasha explained his preference for the Royal meeting, but expressed his readiness to go and see the King himself if I advised that course. As Hafiz insisted that, [? in view of the] sentiments of the King's entourage, it would be a *gaffe* not to profit by the change in His Majesty's [? attitude] brought about by his reports from here, I told the Prime Minister that I thought he ought not to lose this chance to clear up misunderstandings, provided that he was not away from Iraq too long at this critical time.

Since the above was drafted I have again seen the Regent, to whom the Prime Minister had reported.

His Highness was grateful that the idea of his meeting Ibn Saud had been abandoned, for he had never felt, somehow, that good could have come from that.

He wanted to tell me he felt the internal situation was such that he would find it difficult to allow the Prime Minister, whose personal position was, as always, delicate, to leave the country even for three days. Having myself had some con- [illegible] to agree with this view. His Highness will inform Nuri Pasha that he and I agree that in the circumstances, it would be best if Hafiz Wahba, who has made a favourable impression on the Regent, could be persuaded to go and explain the situation to his King, conveying assurances of goodwill from the Regent and the Prime Minister.

(Repeated to Jedda, No. 8, and Cairo [group undecypherable].)

E 1260/166/25] No. 45

Mr. Houstoun Boswall to Viscount Halifax.—(Received March 18.)

(No. 90.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, March 18, 1940.*

MY telegram No. 88.

Prime Minister has just told me that he still hopes to be able to make a visit, for which Hafiz Wahba, who acted perhaps somewhat precipitately, has already prepared Ibn Saud.

It would be unfortunate now to disappoint Ibn Saud, who has, Hafiz Wahba tells me, returned a very favourable reply. Nuri Pasha says he has been able to overcome the Regent's objections, which, as his Highness told me, were based solely on delicate political situation here (see my telegram No. 91) by undertaking not to leave country till next week, when the trial of the murderers of the late Minister of Finance will be over and first budget debate finished.

Iraqi Government having no suitable aeroplanes or pilots, he asks if Royal Air Force could convey him, Hafiz Wahba, Secretary and perhaps a member of the Government to and from Ibn Saud's camp near Rumaithiya, for, unless he flies, visit will not be feasible as he cannot spare the time to make the journey overland. I suggest, in order to improve atmosphere at Saudi Court, it is desirable that we should provide the necessary aircraft.

I am communicating with air officer commanding and trust your Lordship may see fit to move Air Ministry to authorise him, if and when Nuri Pasha decides to go, to make necessary arrangements.

(Repeated to Jedda, No. 9, and Cairo (for Middle East Intelligence Centre), No. 8, Saving.)

[E 1265/166/25] No. 46

Mr. Stonehewer-Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received March 19.)

(No. 53.)
(Telegraphic.) *Jedda, March 19, 1940.*

MY telegram No. 50.

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs to-day informed me on Ibn Saud's instructions that, according to the latest report from Hafiz Wahba, Nuri Pasha and Rashid Ali are to visit him in Riyadh. King was hopeful that the visit would result in matters being settled, enveloped in spirit of understanding and accord.

2. On this question Abdulla Suleiman was further instructed to thank me for my communication and to express Ibn Saud's gratitude to His Majesty's Government for their kind interest and for the trouble they were taking to promote a settlement of the outstanding questions. He could assure His Majesty's Government of his and his people's goodwill towards Iraq and of his earnest desire to reach an agreement satisfactorily [group undecypherable].

(Repeated to Bagdad, No. 23.)

[E 1265/166/25] No. 47

Viscount Halifax to Mr. Stonehewer-Bird (Jedda).

(No. 27.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, March 22, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. [illegible]

I presume that now that two disputants have agreed, largely as a result of [illegible] and His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Bagdad, [illegible] discuss matters in person Ibn Saud will not revert to question of publication of [illegible]

2. Should you, however, at any time think it desirable, you may inform Ibn Saud that, although His Majesty's Government are unable to express any [illegible] same applies to the proclamation. If meeting fails (or has failed) procedure of a neutral Arab Commission or of an unofficial British mediator [illegible]

[illegible] connexion I approve your action reported at end of paragraph 2 [illegible] No. 47 of 16th March [illegible] mission, and think that unless His Majesty's Ambassador at Bagdad sees strong objection you should also mention idea of a mediator if ever you judge that this may deter Ibn Saud from some precipitate action.

4. Meanwhile, please express my appreciation of Ibn Saud's message.

(Addressed to Jedda, No. 27. Repeated to Bagdad No. 73.)

E 1253/56/91] No. 48

Viscount Halifax to Mr. Stonehewer-Bird (Jedda).

(No. [illegible])
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, March 22, 1940.*

MY telegram No. 20 of the 1st February, 1939. [Frontier negotiations with the Yemen].

Unless you see objection, please inform Ibn Saud that, in response to [illegible] 1934. Mr. Champion, who accompanied the mission to Sanaa, has been chosen for this purpose and leaves Aden shortly.

2. The following is for your own information only:—

3. The frontier which we desire is the frontier laid down in the Anglo-[illegible] of 1914 [illegible] (*a*) in so far as it may be agreed to make [illegible] the *status quo* line of 1934 and (*b*) in so far as it may be agreed to make [illegible]

4. If, as is likely, it is found impossible to reach a final settlement of the [illegible] Al Abr, it is to be made clear that His Majesty's Government cannot agree to the cession of either of these places. It may, however, be necessary to offer the "neutralisation" of Shabwa and possibly in the last resort of Al Abr also.

5. But acceptance of "neutralisation" will not mean that His Majesty's Government admit that anything which they have done south of the 1914 line since 1934 has been in conflict with the undertaking which they gave in treaty [illegible] form of "neutralisation" may eventually be agreed upon (and even though His Majesty's [illegible] Yemeni Government [illegible] 1914 line), to avoid the appearance of abandoning the legal position. This will be necessary

if only because our task of preserving, as against Ibn Saud, what are regarded as rights of sheikhs under our protection in the neighbourhood of the Persian Gulf would otherwise become yet more difficult. Ibn Saud might, moreover, complain that His Majesty's Government were adopting a more accommodating attitude with the Yemen than with himself, with possibly embarrassing consequences, particularly in Persian Gulf area

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(E 1364 166 25) No. 49

Sir B Newton to Viscount Halifax—(Received March 27)

(No 119

[illegible] His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, with reference to Jedda despatch No. 15 to Foreign Office, dated the 16th February, 1940 has the honour to transmit to him a copy of a note dated the 9th March, 1940 by adviser to Iraqi Ministry of Interior, respecting Saudi-Iraq relations

Baghdad, March 15, 1940

Enclosure in No 49

Note by Mr C J Edmonds, Adviser to the Iraqi Ministry of the Interior

The Friction between Iraq and Saudi Arabia, 1939 40

THE immediate causes of the present friction between Iraq and Saudi Arabia are

(a) The refusal of the Iraqi Legislature to sanction ratification of two of [illegible] and Sheikh Yusuf al Yasin for Saudi Arabia, and signed on [illegible] May, 1938, namely, the Treaty for the Regulation of Grazing and Watering(¹) and the Treaty regarding the Allegiance of the Tribes(²), and

(b) The presence of numerous sections of the Shammar of Nejd near the frontier on the Iraqi side and the depredations committed by them from this point of vantage

In January 1940 this soreness was irritated by :—

(c) A difference of opinion over the interpretation to be given to the arrangements made at Riyadh on the 6th July 1939 for the continuance of the frontier survey near Muqur

2 Point of difference (c) has been settled, it is only necessary to remark that the acceptance by the Iraqi Government of the Saudi point of view was due to a general desire to get on with the work in hand and to the practical considerations explained in my note of the 7th January, 1940, and that it was not due to threats made in any communication received from the Saudi Arabian Government

3 The reason given by the opponents of the treaties i[illegible] of [illegible] legislation. This was unfortunate The validity of the reason is open to question, it has, in consequence, led to much superfluous verbiage in the correspondence (see paragraphs 15-21 below) and has, no doubt, helped to obscure the real objections to the treaties in their present form.

(¹) The third treaty dealt with the administration of the Neutral Zone set up by the first Protocol of Uqair of the 2nd December 1922

(²) See "Further Correspondence respecting Eastern Affairs, Part XLV No 10 [illegible] ly called the "Treaty respecting Tribal Nationality," but this is a better rendering See "Further Correspondence respecting Eastern Affairs," Part XLV [illegible]

4 It will be convenient to recall at this stage that the existing treaties and agreements, covering neighbourly relations between Iraq and Saudi Arabia (which has inherited the rights and obligations of the Sultanate of Nejd) are the following —

Treaty of Muhammara (¹) the 5th May, 1922
Protocol of Uqair, No. 1,(²) the 2nd December, 1922
Protocol of Uqair, No 2 (³) the 2nd December, 1922
Hahra Agreement,(⁴) the 1st November, 1925
Treaty of Mecca (Friendship and "Bon-Voisinage") (⁵) the 7th April, 1931
Treaty of Bagdad (Arab Brotherhood and Alliance),(⁶) the 2nd April, 1936

Many of the provisions of these numerous treaties overlap and in some places are mutually contradictory

5 The point at issue in the Treaty for the Regulation of Grazing and Watering is simple In Appendix 1 will be found :—

(a) The first Saudi draft (dated November 1937) of article 4 in two alternative forms
(b) the counter-draft suggested by the Iraqi Ministry of the Interior as a concession to the Saudi point of view, and
(c) The text of article 4 in the treaty as signed

[illegible] Such a procedure might obviously [illegible] to all precedent and [illegible] the words "notify the said tribes of this wish" and to omit the sentence regarding the officials The Saudi communications insist in somewhat violent [illegible] The text as it stands contains the seeds of permanent trouble. The most satisfactory solution, things having gone so far, would be for the treaty to be ratified after modification as proposed On the other hand, nothing would be lost by leaving this four article treaty still born, neither Government has ever attempted to charge customs duty on the tents, flocks, &c, of the other, neither has denied the right of the other to impose veterinary precautions or restrictions on arms, though neither has, as far as I remember ever done so

6 Before discussing the Treaty regarding the Allegiance of the Tribes it will be well to give a sketch of its historical background In article 1 of the [illegible] as Iraqi, the Shammar Nejd as Saudi. On numerous occasions, however, King Abdul Aziz has claimed the Dahamsha, a section of the Amarat, as Saudi subjects, basing his claim on article 1 of the Second Protocol of Uqair and the allegation that the chief of the tribe, Jazza ibn Mujad, was at that date in Syria and in 1923 went to Nejd (he came back to Iraq in 1924). The Iraqi Government rejects the claim on the grounds—

(a) That the article in the protocol covers only tribes not then subject to either party whereas the Iraqi citizenship of the Dahamsha was already fixed by the treaty itself, and
(b) That in any case the tribe was camped in Iraq and that the temporary [illegible] was

(¹) These instruments, which have not previously been printed, are now printed as Appendices 3, 4 and 5 hereto

(²) See Cmd 2569

(³) See "Further Correspondence respecting Eastern Affairs," Part XXVIII No 112

(⁴) See "Further Correspondence respecting Eastern Affairs," Part XXXVIII No 17

7. The great majority of the Dahamsha (about 1,600 tents) are normally in Iraq, occasionally they cross into Nejd for grazing. The following are now permanently in Nejd:—

(a) Some 100 tents of man who participated in the capture of Hail in 1921 and were settled by the King behind the Dahana, and

(b) Some 100 tents which crossed with a grievance in 1924.

8. The Dhafir number over 1,000 tents and are permanently in Iraq. The chief sheikh of this tribe, Ajmi as Suwait, moved to Nejd with 113 tents in 1926; some 180 tents went over in 1934 or 1935 after encounters with the police while engaged in smuggling.

9. As regards the Shammar—

(a) After the fall of Hail, the headquarters of the Ibn Rashid dynasty, in 1921 large numbers of Shammar Nejd came into Iraq. Their raids back into Nejd caused grave friction between the two Governments; they were moved northwards across the Euphrates to the Upper Jazira, west of Mosul, and placed under the supervision of Sheikh Ajil of the Shammar of Iraq. Almost all these refugees returned to Nejd between the years 1927 and 1935, the only important exception being Aqab-bin Ajil of the Shammar Abda of Nejd, who continues to live in the Jazira with a small following. Although in theory the [illegible] dary between the two countries was to be drawn so as to divide [illegible] *dairas* of the tribes concerned, this was, in [illegible] small segment of the Shammar *daira* near the Ath[illegible] the frontier line falls in Iraq, just as a large part of the Amarat *daira* falls in Nejd. Since about 1932 the permanent residents of the segment have been:

i) About eighty tents of Shammar Tuman under Misha'al al Timyat. About 150 tents of Shammar Sinjara under Nazal bin Thimayan [illegible] bin Dhaidan, and Chasib-bin Abachit, these frequently cross into Nejd in spring.

(b) For purposes of internal Shammar politics the Tuman are closely allied with the Sayih. Many years before the Great War Barghash al Timyat, father of Misha'al, settled with the Sayih of Iraq in the Jabal Hamrin region, north of Bagdad. These Tuman are not refugees from Nejd, but have recently been attracted to the Southern Desert by the better grazing and water. Following a quarrel with the Dahamsha, Mishal al Timyat went to Nejd in 1932 and for three years received a salary from the Saudi court. In 1935 he fell foul of the Amir of Hail and returned to Iraq.

(c) The Shammar Sinjara mentioned are Nejdi. The sections named now camp normally in Iraq; they cannot be considered as guilty survivors of the great exodus of 1921, as they have frequently been in and out of Nejd. Chasib-bin Abachit, for instance, first came over in 1928, visited the King himself in 1935 and received presents.

10. When the negotiations opened at the end of 1936 the Saudi representative suggested that the parties should undertake to eject from their territory, Saudi Arabia the Dhafir and Iraq the Shammar, but that the nationality of [illegible] division according to habitat. The Iraqi negotiator was briefed to recall the principle, laid down in article 6 of the Treaty of Friendship, of freedom of movement for purposes of grazing without any implication regarding loyalty or nationality, and to suggest—

(a) That any Shammar camped permanently in the Jazira and any [illegible] to change their nationality;

(b) That each Government might, by means of letter sent with the knowledge of the authorities of the other party and conveying a full pardon, endeavour to persuade its subjects camped near the frontier to return; and

(c) That each should undertake not to encourage such sections to stay by means of employment, salaries and presents.

11. A glance at the treaty as signed (Appendix 2) will show how far the Iraqi negotiator was led from his brief. In particular, it is to be noted that no objection is made to moving any Dahamsha who acquire Saudi nationality away from the frontier. The Iraqi Government in December 1939 wrote suggesting that the objectionable article 4 should be redrafted as follows:—

> "The two Governments undertake not to allow any persons whose nationality has been changed in accordance with articles 1 and 2 of this treaty to reside in any place their residence in which might be likely to cause trouble to the other Government."

12. In my opinion, the whole treaty is vicious, and contains the seeds of future trouble and friction far more serious than any momentary irritation caused by the refusal to ratify. The condition of a change of nationality for ordinary people is residence in the new country for several years; a six months' sojourn of a nomadic tribesman may be due to purely temporary or accidental causes and means nothing whatever. Under the text as it stands the whole of the Dahamsha might change their nationality and then resume their custom of living ten months of the year or more in Iraq as far north as Kerbela. Even with the Iraqi amendment (which would, of course, not be accepted in any case), the Govern[illegible] offer serious practical difficulties. It would be best for all concerned to let the treaty die and make no attempt to amend it.

13. While I consider that, taking the longer view, ratification of the two treaties would do more harm than good to relations between Iraq and Saudi Arabia, I think that in the matter of the Shammar depredations the Saudi [illegible] in paragraph 9 above, they have probably been encouraged by the local officials. According to a report from the commandant of police in the Southern Desert, the total number of tents is now over 2,000. It is well known that these Shammar have been thieving in Nejd from this base.

14. Neighbourly relations treaties in this part of Asia generally cont[illegible] an article by which each Government undertakes to remove from the vicinity of the frontier any tribe that crosses from the territory of its own Government in a state of rebellion and disobedience. This is an elementary neighbourly duty; if the case were normal the procedure should be applied whether there is any specific treaty obligation or not, and the Iraqi Government ought to give the Najdi Shammar camped in the segment the chance of returning to Saudi [illegible] But [illegible] of the large numbers now involved, it might be necessary to limit the expulsions in the first place to some of the most objectionable leaders and sections, or perhaps, better still, to those who have come over in the last three or four years, [illegible] Saudi Arabian Government should therefore furnish lists of leaders and sections classified into, say, three degrees of objectionableness, showing the date of their last migration to Iraq. The latter alternative would have the advantage of avoiding disputes as to nationality which could only arise over chiefs or sections [illegible] justification, in my opinion) the Tuman of Mishal al Timyat mentioned in paragraph 9 (b) as Saudi on account of his remoter origin or his sojourn from 1932 to 1935, while Iraq might claim (again without justification, in my opinion) Chasib-al Abachit, mentioned in paragraph 9 (c), in view of his long and [illegible] The [illegible] King Abd al Aziz [illegible] the ratification of the treaty is doubtless largely (but not altogether) due to the fact that the second contains specific provision for the expulsion of the Shammar from their present place. Once expulsion has taken place, ratification loses [illegible] But [illegible] the future the *right* of the Shammar, under the treaties, to come into this area for graz[illegible]

15. As [illegible] an Iraqi offi[illegible] put forward [illegible] Saudi Arabia [illegible] but it was dragged

[illegible] The report was completed, but only recorded inability to elucidate the facts [illegible] waste of time and absence of result (although always inevitable) could only add to any impression of absence of will to settle and to Saudi annoyance. It only remains to set up the tribunal provided for in articles 9 and 10 of the Treaty of Mecca. Although the claim for the stolen camels figures prominently in the Saudi complaints, this would presumably lose something of its urgency if the perpetrators of the robberies were rendered harmless for the future as proposed in paragraph 13.

16. To complete the picture it is necessary to refer to the correspondence that has recently passed between the parties. On the 28th December, 1939, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs wrote in studiously friendly language explaining the reasons for the refusal of Parliament to ratify the two treaties, and proposing the amendments referred to in paragraphs 5 and 11 above. On the 6th January, 1940, the Saudi Legation replied in a violently worded letter of six pages of close Arabic typescript. After a paragraph on the intolerable situation created by the Shammar depredations, the burden of the letter is that all the Saudi demands [illegible] by treaties previously ratified, and that Iraq is precluded from [illegible] behind its alleged legislation in order to escape carrying out its obligations under these treaties.

17. In support of the demand for expulsion, the letter makes the following [illegible] nces (my comments in brackets) —

(a) It quotes article 1 of the Treaty of Muhammara [illegible] honour it and return the Nadji Shammar to Nejd. (The art [illegible] course only defines the nationality of the tribes and contains nothing about ejection.)

[illegible] quotes article 4 of the Treaty of Bahra, and complains that it has not been honoured. (This article specifically excludes any obligat[illegible] eject by force, as regards inducements, I suspect that local [illegible] are not entirely innocent and one small salary has been paid for many years that ought to be stopped, but anything they have done cannot compare with the lavishness of Ibn Saud to Iraqi tribesmen going to him, a lavishness which he has in the past excused as obligatory under Arab custom.)

[illegible] quotes article 9 of the Treaty of Bahra, and complains that it has not been implemented. (This is getting nearer the bone, but I am not aware that the article had been invoked in previous correspondence, the Iraqi Government considers that there have been no raids, but only alleged thefts, the distinction appears to us a quibble, but both sides seem to admit the distinction. In any case thefts are covered by the next obligation quoted.)

[illegible] quotes article 3 of the Treaty of Mecca. (This is the appropriate article to quote, the Iraqi attitude is that the Government will, of course, honour this obligation but that the Saudi side did not report the alleged incidents when committed, but only many months afterwards, and then with inadequate details.)

18. This section of the letter ends by demanding either —

(a) The ratification of the treaty regarding the allegiance of the tribes without any change and its complete enforcement, or
(b) The return of the Shammar to Saudi territory "in accordance with the Treaty of Muhammara," or, at least,
(c) The removal of the Shammar to beyond the Euphrates.

Demand (c) corresponds to the course recommended in my paragraph 13 above. The formulation of three alternatives seems to open the way to the dropping of the unfortunate treaty altogether, if the third alternative is accepted.

19. In connexion with the objections to the Grazing Treaty, the letter quotes the Treaty of Mecca (presumably article 12 is meant) where the crossing of the frontier by officials is provided for, and article 8 of the Treaty of Bahra as an example of notification to tribes. (Neither of these articles provides for an official personally conveying orders to tribes camped in the territory of the other Government.)

20. The letter clearly attempts to draw a distinction between the Government and the people of Iraq, and contains a threat to publish all the documents for the edification of that people and of the Arab world. (If dirty linen is to be washed in public, it is doubtful if Iraq will come off second best.)

21. The Iraqi reply was sent on the 8th February, 1940. Much space is of necessity (in the light of the threat to publish) devoted to refuting these incorrect [illegible] with an assurance of a desire to settle the matter amicably, and uses for details of the sections of the Shammar complained against, the names of their chiefs and the date of the entry of each into Iraq. It also agrees to refer the claims for settlement under the procedure defined in the Treaty of Mecca, articles 8 and 9 and asks for the names of the Saudi representatives and suggestions for the place of meeting (the names of the Iraqi representatives were communicated in earlier letters some months ago).

[illegible] these concrete proposals. It regrets that the Iraqi Government should seek to evade its obligations by resorting to the method of exegesis and interpretation, proposes conciliation by Arab personages who have Arab interests at heart and again threatens, if this is not agreed to, to publish the documents in an appeal to the people of Iraq, the Arabs and the Islamic world.

March 9, 1940.

Appendix 1

(a) *Copy of Article 4 of the First Saudi Draft Treaty for the Regularisation of Grazing and Watering (dated November 1937) in two Alternative Forms*

THE Government of Saudi Arabia agrees not to collect zakat or similar taxes from the nationals of the Iraq Government whilst encamped in its territory for grazing purposes. The Iraq Government likewise agrees not to collect koda or similar taxes from the nationals of Saudi Arabia whilst encamped in its territory for grazing purposes.

2. The Government of Saudi Arabia agrees to allow the servants of the State of Iraq to enter the territory of Saudi Arabia, in order to collect koda tax from Iraqi nationals residing in the territory of Saudi Arabia, on request. The Iraq Government likewise agrees to allow the servants of the State of Saudi Arabia to enter Iraq territory, in order to collect zakat from the nationals of Saudi Arabia, on request.

or

When the times comes for the collection by the Government of Saudi Arabia of zakat from its nationals, the Iraq Government undertakes to send out the Saudi nationals to the Saudi territory for the purpose of collection of zakat from them by their own Government, on demand. The Government of Saudi Arabia likewise undertakes to send out the Iraqi nationals to Iraq territory for the purpose of collection of koda from them by their own Government on demand.

(b) *Counter-draft suggested by the Ministry of Interior*

If either Government wishes to collect Government taxes from its trib[illegible] above mentioned shall communicate with each other in order to notify the said tribes of the wish of their Government.

(c) *Final Form in the Treaty as signed*

If either high contracting party wishes to collect Government taxes from its [illegible] shall communicate with each other in order to notify the said [illegible]

of this wish and endeavour through possible means to induce them to comply with it. The former high contracting party may send one of his officials to carry out the required notification, in which case such official must call upon the competent official of the latter high contracting party, who shall accompany [illegible] to one of his officials in order that the notification should be made in his [illegible]

Appendix 2

Draft Treaty between Iraq and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia concerning the Allegiance of Tribes (as signed).

Article 1

THE Iraq Government agrees that the Dahamsha and Dhafir tribesmen settled in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia shall be considered to have acquired the [illegible] from the date of the notification that their stay in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia would involve the loss of the Iraq nationality.

Article 2

[illegible] Shammar Nejd tribesmen settled in Iraq shall be considered to have acquired [illegible] within six months from the date of the notification that their stay in Iraq would involve the loss of the Arab Saudi nationality.

Article 3

The Governments of Iraq and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia agree not to employ on the frontier any of the individuals whose nationality has been changed in accordance with articles 1 and 2 hereof.

Article 4

(*a*) The Iraq Government undertakes to require those of the Shammar Nejd tribesmen who elect its nationality to settle beyond the Euphrates or in places lying on the same distance from the frontier as the Euphrates. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia similarly undertakes to require those of the Dhafir tribesmen who elect its nationality to settle beyond the Dahana' or in places lying on the same distance from the frontier as the Dahana'. In the event of sterility in those areas, the Iraq Government undertakes, as regards the Shammar Nejd tribesmen, and the Government of Saudi Arabia undertakes, as regards the Dhafir tribesmen in question, to take the necessary measures to prevent them from approaching the frontier and to keep them in such a remote place therefrom that it will be difficult for them to commit anything likely to disturb security.

(*b*) The Government of the Arab Saudi Kingdom undertakes, as regards the Dahamsha tribesmen who elect its nationality, to prevent them from causing anything likely to disturb security on the frontier.

Appendix 3

Treaty of Muhammerah, May 5, 1922.

(In the name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate!)

WITH a view to securing friendship and good relations between the two Governments of Iraq and Nejd [illegible] Iraq, and by His Highness Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud, Sultan of Nejd and its

[illegible] and by his Excellency Major-General Sir P. Z. Cox, G.C.M.G., [illegible], K.C.S.I., His Britannic Majesty's High Commissioner in Iraq, in order to draft a treaty between the Iraq and Nejd Governments, have agreed upon the following articles:—

Article 1

(*a*) The tribes known as the Muntafiq, Dhafir and Amarat will belong(*) to Iraq, both Governments, that is to say the Government of Iraq and the Government of Nejd, guarantee mutually that they will prevent aggression by their tribes on the tribes of the other, and will punish their tribes for any such aggression, and should the circumstances not permit of such punishment, the two Governments will discuss the question of taking combined action according to the good relations prevailing between them.

[illegible] Nejd delegate having refused to accept the boundaries asked for by the Iraq Government, the following principle was laid down:—

According to article 1 (*a*) the Muntafiq, Dhafir and Amarat tribes belong(*) to Iraq, similarly the Shammar Nejd belong(*) to Nejd. The wells and lands used from old times by the Iraq tribes shall belong to Iraq, and the wells and lands used from old times by the Shammar Nejd shall belong to Nejd. In order to determine the location of these lands and wells and to fix a boundary line in accordance with this principle, a committee shall be formed consisting of two persons with local knowledge from each Government, and presided over by a [illegible] Bagdad to fix the final boundaries, and both parties will accept these boundaries without any objection.

Article 2

The two Governments, Iraq and Nejd, guarantee to ensure the safety of the pilgrim routes and protect pilgrims from every kind of molestation so long as [illegible] Nejd to His Britannic Majesty's Government in article 5 of the treaty between [illegible]

Article 3

(*a*) The two Governments agree that commercial intercourse shall be free from restrictions, and that each Government shall treat merchants belonging to the other in the same way as it treats its own merchants.

[illegible] similarly raw and manufactured products of Iraq when imported into Nejd, shall be subject to the same tariff as prevails in the case of other friendly countries in respect of import, export, transit, and re-export duties, and all other custom matters.

(*c*) The two Governments shall have the right to increase their customs duties and to levy fresh local and special taxation not in force at the present time provided that such alteration shall be similar to those enforced against other friendly countries. Each Government shall inform the other of any regulations issued by it in these matters.

Article 4

The two Governments agree to freedom of travel in their respective countries [illegible] purposes of trade or pilgrimage, provided that travellers are in possession of passports issued by their own Government. Each Government shall inform the other of any regulations issued by it in this matter.

Article 5

Any tribe belonging to one of the countries which settles in the other country shall pay grazing fees.

(* There is evidently some confusion as to the meaning of the Arabic verb "[illegible]," which is here translated "belong." Ibn Saud apparently takes it to mean "go back." See E. 1145/106/25 (1940).

ARTICLE 6

In the event (which God forbid) of a breach in the relations between either of the Governments and the British Government, this treaty shall become null and void.

Postscriptum

1. This treaty shall not be valid until it has been ratified by their Majesties the Rulers of Iraq and Nejd and by his Excellency the High Commissioner.

2. The delegate of Nejd guarantees that, pending the decision of the committee which will meet in Bagdad, the tribes of Nejd will not attack the tribes of Iraq.

Appendix 4

Protocol of Uqair No. 1, December 2, 1922

(In the name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate!)

THIS protocol defining the boundaries between the two Governments of Iraq and Nejd is appended to the agreement made at Mohammerah on the seventh day of Ramadhan the Blessed in the year 1340, which corresponds to the fifth day of May of the year 1922.

ARTICLE 1

(*a*) The frontier from the east begins at the junction of the Wadi al Aujah [illegible] (Dhalmiya) and Al Wuqubah (El Ukabba) north of the line, and from Al Wuqubah (El Ukabba) it continues N.W. to Bir Ansab (Bir Unsab).

(*b*) Starting from the point mentioned above, *i.e.*, from the po[illegible] Iraq boundary continues in a straight line N.W. to Al Amghar (El Amghar), leaving this place to the south of the line, and from thence proceeds S.W. in a straight line until it joins the Nejd frontier at Bir Ansab (Bir Unsab).

(*c*) The area delimited by the points enumerated above, which includes all these points, will remain neutral and common to the two Governments of Iraq and Nejd, who will enjoy equal rights in it for all purposes.

(*d*) From Bir Ansab (Bir Unsab) the boundary between the two States proceeds N.W. to Birkat-al-Jumaimah (Birkat-el-Ljumeima), and from thence northwards to Bir al Uqbah (Bir el Akaba) and Qasr Uthaimin (Kasr Athmin), from there westwards in a straight line, passing through the centre of Jal al Batn (Djal-el-Batn) to Bir Lifiyah (Bir Lifa), and then to Bir al Manaiyah [illegible] there to Mukur, and from Mukur to the Jabal Anazan (Anaza), situated in the neighbourhood of the intersection of latitude 32° east with longitude 39° north,(*) where the Iraq–Nejd boundary terminates.

ARTICLE 2

Whereas many of the wells fall within the Iraq boundaries and the Nejd side is deprived of them, the Iraq Government pledges itself not to interfere with those Nejd tribes living in the vicinity of the border should it be necessary for them to resort to the neighbouring Iraq wells for water, provided that these wells are nearer to them than those within the Nejd boundaries.

ARTICLE 3

The two Governments mutually agree not to use the watering places and wells situated in the vicinity of the border for any military purpose, such as building forts on them, and not to concentrate troops in their vicinity.

(*) There is obviously an error in the Arabic text here. The co-ordinates should read "latitude 32° north" and "longitude 39° east."

ARTICLE 4

The delegates of the two Governments have agreed to the above terms of this [illegible] Rabi II 1341, corresponding to the 2nd December, 1922.

Representative of His Majesty the King of Iraq,
SUBIH

Representative of His Highness the Sultan of Nejd,
ABDULLAH SAID DAMLUJI

The Sultan of Nejd and its Dependencies, Abdul Aziz ibn-Abdul Rahman al Saud, has agreed to the articles of this protocol.

King of Iraq:
FAISAL IBN AL HUSAIN

Appendix 5

Protocol of Uqair No. 2, December 2, 1922

(In the name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate!)

ARTICLE 1

WHEREAS the two Governments of Iraq and Nejd have mutually agreed [illegible] any tribe or section of a tribe which is outside the boundaries of, and not subject to, either Government desire to offer its allegiance to one of them, they will not prevent it from doing so.

ARTICLE 2

Whereas the customs duties in both countries are mutually known, all [illegible] Both Governments further agree mutually by all means in their power to put an end to the practice prevailing among the tribes of taking khawah.

ARTICLE 3

The duly appointed delegates of both Governments have agreed to the foregoing clauses of this protocol, and have set to it their signatures in Uqair on the [illegible] 1922.

Representative of His Majesty the King of Iraq,
SUBIH

Representative of His Highness the Sultan of Nejd,
ABDULLAH SAID DAMLUJI

The Sultan of Nejd and its Dependencies, Abdul Aziz ibn-Abdul Rahman-al-Saud, has agreed to the articles of this protocol.

King of Iraq:
FAISAL-IBN-AL-HUSAIN

E 1442 56 91 No. 56

Mr Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax (Received March 31)

(No. 57)
(Telegraphic) *Jedda, March 31 1940*

I DULY communicated message contained in first paragraph of your telegram No 28. In his reply the King expresses thanks and good wishes for agreement between the two countries. He hopes that, if discussions extend to frontiers between Saudi Arabia the Yemen and southern States, he may be kept informed, so that delimitation of these frontiers may be effected jointly between the countries

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E 1488 166 25 No. 51

Sir B Newton to Viscount Halifax—(Received April 4)

(No. 100)
(Telegraphic) *Bagdad April 3, 1940*

HAFIZ WAHBA mentioned to me to-day a suggestion, said to be favoured by the Minister of Defence, that the Iraqi Government should conclude an anti aggression pact or some form of military alliance with Saudi Arabia. Hafiz Wahba himself seemed to think this a good idea, and suggested that it would spike the guns of German propaganda and be a satisfactory outcome of the Minister for Foreign Affairs' visit to Ibn Saud

2. I told Hafiz Wahba that nothing had been said to me on the subject by the Iraqi Government and that His Majesty's Government would no doubt expect to be consulted by them in view of special Anglo-Iraqi treaty relations

3. Nuri Pasha called later, and without mentioning Hafiz Wahba I took [illegible] like the original draft Treaty of Friendship of 1930 which was abandoned in [illegible] He assured me that this would not occur, and that the Iraqi Government were very conscious of their obligations towards His Majesty's Government. This question providing for mutual assistance in certain limited eventualities might be discussed, [illegible] with His Majesty's Government

Nuri Pasha and Hafiz Wahba leave early on 4th April

Repeated to Jedda, No 11, and Cairo, No 32 (for Middle East Intelligence Centre)

E 1524 166 25 No. 52

Political Agent, Bahrein to Political Resident, Persian Gulf—(Repeated to Foreign Office, Received April 7)

(No. 97)
(Telegraphic) *Bahrein April 7 1940*

IRAQI Minister for Foreign Affairs and Saudi Arabian Minister in London spent about an hour here this morning on return flight from Ibn Saud's camp Houstoun Boswall, who is staying with me, and I found them both delighted with results of meeting, chief of which probably was dissipation of King's intense distrust of Nuri, who in turn appears to have been greatly impressed by Ibn Saud's wisdom and now genuine goodwill

2. We gathered that arrangements have been made to settle Shammar [illegible] by establishment of zone on both sides of frontier to be administered by [illegible] commission with powers of summary jurisdiction. Those Shammars who [illegible] envisaged. Vague project of military alliance, which was apparently mentioned to His Majesty's Ambassador, Bagdad, does not seem to have been pursued.

3. Hafiz thinks he has talked over Khalid hitherto most [? anti-British] of Ibn Saud family

4. Both Ministers were immensely grateful to His Majesty's Government for having facilitated this meeting Royal Air Force personnel were treated with immense kindness by Ibn Saud

(Repeated to India Office, Ambassador, Bagdad, Minister, Jedda. Copy by post to Government of India.)

E 1526 166 25 No. 53

Mr Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax—(Received April 8)

(No. 61)
(Telegraphic) *Jedda, April 8, 1940*

CAIRO telegram No. 21 for Middle East Intelligence

Bahrein telegram No. 97 to Bushire Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs called on me to-day and confirmed that complete agreement had been reached as a result of conversation with Nuri Pasha. Ibn Saud wishes to thank His Majesty's Government for their valuable contribution to this result

(Repeated to Bagdad, No. 25)

E 1595 307 91 No. 54

Lieutenant Colonel Prior to Major Hay—(Communicated by India Office, Received April 11)

D O No 99 S. (Secret.) *The Residency,*
Dear Hay, *Bushire, March 28 1940*

I ENCLOSE a demi-official letter from Weightman, dated the 21st [illegible] 1940, which explains itself

2. The result is in every way satisfactory, and the matter may now be considered settled Weightman, who has handled the matter very well, has particularly requested that it may be kept secret, and I would be glad if it was not alluded to except in a self-contained letter I am keeping his letter in my personal [illegible]

3. I am sending a copy of this letter to the India Office

Yours sincerely,
[illegible]

Enclosure in No 54

Mr Weightman to Lieutenant Colonel Prior

(Secret.) *The Agency, Bahrein*
My dear Prior, *February 21, 1940*

YOU will remember that we had some discussion in Koweit about the Bahrein succession and that you sent me a copy of a document by which Sheikh Isa b [illegible] nominated Sheikh Hamad as heir to the Sheikhdom of Bahrein some forty two years ago

2. Soon after my return here I found an opportunity to [illegible] Sheikh Hamad whether he had given any further thought to the [illegible] should nominate his successor He told me that he had been thinking it over and had come to the conclusion that he should nominate his eldest son Salman There were ample precedents—of excellent quality—for the nomination of an eldest son to the succession—and what did I think? Naturally, I applauded his views and said (in effect) that while one must recognise the wisdom in Arab non insistence on primogeniture, one must equally recognise that an eldest son should only be excluded if he is patently unfit for the succession, and cannot be expected to maintain the position of Ruler This comment according with His Highness's own views, he announced to me his final decision to nominate Sheikh Salman

3. The next question concerned the manner and form of the nomination. His Highness was insistent that it should be done secretly In spite of the many [illegible]

[illegible] and I accordingly suggested the procedure which I had mentioned to you [illegible] name of the nominee being left blank, that the principal Sunni Qadhi and the Shia "Appeal" Qadhi and Sheikh Rashid (His Highness's father-in-law) be summoned to a private meeting where—from a distance—they would see His Highness write certain words with his own hand in a document, but would not be told what the document or the words were, that the document should then be folded until only His Highness's seal was visible, and that they should then sign as witnesses. I thought Sheikh Isa a document would do very well with one amendment (the exclusion of the reference to the requests made from time to time by his subjects to Sheikh Isa to make a nomination) and with the requisite change of names. His Highness was delighted with these suggestions, and they were carried out in a room in the Adviserate on Friday, the 16th February. Friday was selected as there would be no one about. His Highness wrote the words "Waladi Salman bin Hamad" clearly and firmly in the appropriate place, signed his full name at the head of the document and attached his seal both above and below it. The witnesses performed their task in an atmosphere redolent with unsatisfied curiosity (I believe they think they were witnessing an ordinary property will) and were warned not to mention the matter to a soul. At the moment, apart from His Highness and myself, Belgrave and Abdulla-bin-Jabr, His Highness's confidential secretary, are the only persons in Bahrein who know the name of the successor.

4. The document has been deposited in the Eastern Bank, and the only—incomplete—copy is in my possession. This copy I have completed in pencil, in English, and have locked it away for future reference if necessary. Photographs were taken as each person signed, and will be attached to the original document if they are successful. They are *not* being printed and developed in Bahrein.

Yours sincerely,
H. WEIGHTMAN

E 1509/252/25] No. 55

Viscount Halifax to Mr. Stonehewer Bird (Jedda)

(No. 33)

Foreign Office, April 12, 1940

[illegible]

It has been decided that, as the prospect of a credit of £200,000 ever being repaid is remote, it will be better to treat it frankly as a subsidy, so far, at any rate, as administrative procedure in this country is concerned. Sum required [illegible] £200,000 [illegible] as, will be required, and no interest will be charged.

2. You may therefore inform the Saudi Arabian Government that His Majesty's Government have now decided, as a matter of friendly regard, to make advances up to a total of £200,000 without any signed agreement providing for [illegible] His Majesty's Government are content to rely on Ibn Saud to repay the advances as soon as his convenience permits.

3. You should explain that the money is intended for purchases within the [illegible] approximately £40,000 will be needed for payments to the mint, &c., for 1 million rials, and the balance of approximately £160,000 will be placed at disposal of the Saudi Arabian Government in blocked accounts in countries within sterling area in which purchases will be made.

4. Please ascertain and report:—

(1) Banks, presumably in India, Egypt and Singapore, to which Saudi Arabian Government wish payments to be made.

(2) Amount to be paid to each bank, total not exceeding £160,000.

[illegible] Saudi Arabian Government to draw on each bank.

5. As regards minting I regret that it is not possible to provide more than [illegible]

E 1637/1637/91] No. 56

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax. (Received April 12.)

(No. 139.)

My Lord,

Bagdad, March 31, 1940

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith an account of the tour which I have just undertaken along the Arabian coast of the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman (1). As I believe that I am the first ambassador from Bagdad to visit an area which is seldom seen by any official responsible to the Foreign Office, I have thought it worth while to describe my experiences in some detail. In this covering despatch I confine myself to certain impressions or observations of a general nature.

The Great Potential Oil Resources of the Area

2. First and foremost, it was brought home to me what an immense value this arid and sparsely populated country may possess as a source of oil. In particular I was struck by what I saw and heard of developments on the little-known coast of Hasa between Koweit and Bahrein. Oil-fields here have only been brought into production within the last two years, but already the American [illegible] being well rewarded. Ten thousand barrels a day are being delivered from an oil-field at Dhahran to the neighbouring refinery on the Island of Bahrein, and up to 20,000 barrels are being piped 40 miles to the Port of Ras Tanura, a quantity which can be increased to 30,000 barrels when tankers and markets are available. Most of these wells are at a level of just over 4,000 feet, but a fortnight before my arrival a new well had been brought in at a depth of 10,000 feet in an area well to the north of Ras Tanura, where discovery work was in active progress. In the neutral zone, between Hasa, belonging to Saudi Arabia, and Koweit, where a good oil-field has been proved by a joint Anglo-American company, no concession has been granted, but the prospects for oil are believed to be good.

3. Turning south-east from Dhahran a small but productive field has been brought into production in the Island of Bahrein by an American-owned [illegible] has recently been struck by the Petroleum Development Company (Limited), which is another name for the international association known in Iraq as the Iraq Petroleum Company. The same group operating as Petroleum Concessions [illegible] Trucial Coast. Exploration is not being continued on account of the war or for reasons of oil policy, but I have heard that the indications were thought to justify further search when the time was ripe. The long range of low mountains extending from the southern head of the Persian Gulf down to Aden has hitherto, I understand, been hardly explored, and I could not help wondering whether these [illegible] other mineral wealth. The surface of this whole vast area from Koweit to Muscat and beyond, is desiccated and for long stretches seemingly almost devoid of human, animal or vegetable life, but in the not very distant future its subsoil wealth may prove to be that of a second Texas or California. [illegible] a mere speculation, but I feel that in considering Br[illegible] in this region its vast potentialities should be kept well [illegible]

Maintenance of British Predominance

4. A second and consequential impression was the importance of maintaining our predominance and the tranquil pro-British atmosphere now prevailing in an area which has long been remote from outside contacts except with India, but can hardly remain so much longer. Its wealth, both proved and potential, must surely lead to its exploitation and to foreign incursions, the more so because access and communications are being made easy by air and motor transport and their risks reduced by portable wireless, while simultaneously climatic obstacles are being partially [illegible] by electric light, fans and refrigerators and, above all, by the provision of air-conditioning in offices, [illegible] I have referred is no doubt primarily due to the work of the Political Resident

(1) Not printed.

and the political agents who represent Indian and Imperial interests in the Persian Gulf and Oman. I only wish I could have learnt from Colonel Prior and from Mr. Weightman and Captain Hickinbotham, who were such extremely kind, hospitable and informative hosts to me at Bahrein and Muscat, how to bring about similar conditions in the restless Arab country of Iraq.

5. While my own impressions were casual and are, of course, subject to correction, it seemed to me that a principal means of creating and maintaining our satisfactory position must have been, and must remain, the exclusion of other foreigners. I am inclined to regret that in the case of Iraq we could not, when giving complete internal independence, have excluded foreign diplomatic representation in the same way as we did, in fact, reserve the right to object to the State employment of foreigners where British subjects were available. Perhaps Iraq was too big and too internationally minded to allow another country to conduct its foreign relations. But so far as I understand [illegible] position on the Gulf, we are by treaty or other recognised instruments entitled to control foreign activities in Koweit, Bahrein and the seven Trucial States. Only in Muscat does our international position seem to be less secure. If this is so and safeguards for the future should be desirable, no doubt the authorities directly concerned will draw attention to the matter.

6. As, however, the Foreign Office is also concerned from the point of view of international relations and of the maintenance of British predominance all round the Arabian peninsula, I would suggest that some consideration should be given to this question in that department. For example, the Anglo-French declaration of 1862 can be of little importance now to France, and it may be that its existence could tie our own hands in making arrangements with the Sultan of a nature to prevent foreign intrigues and the growth of foreign influence. I believe that in 1912 it did hamper our efforts to suppress the arms traffic. While the British and French Governments seem by this instrument to have imposed a self-denying ordinance on themselves, other Governments ostensibly at least are left with a free hand. It requires no great stretch of the imagination to fear that this state of affairs might be exploited to our detriment [illegible] by Turkey, Persia and America. Thanks to the Political Resident and the Political Agent at Muscat our position could hardly be better *de facto*. What I have in mind is that the excellence of our *de facto* relations should be used while the opportunity remains favourable to establish our position *de jure*, and thus guard against an uncertain future. The present Sultan of Muscat is strong [illegible] Egypt) find it difficult to resist the flattery and seductions of an unscrupulous foreign Government. The attempts to establish foreign influence which have been made in the past will doubtless recur unless the way can be blocked, and it may therefore be well to review the situation now in order that if any consolidation of our position *de jure* is, in fact, desirable, we may be ready to take advantage of the opportunity afforded by the war or by the subsequent peace settlement. As a sidelight on this aspect of Muscat I would mention a remark recently made to me by a resident from Aden which, whether or not historically justified, at least serves to point my present moral. It was that after the last war, owing to war weariness and perhaps for more altruistic reasons, we declined to accept some offer or proposal made by a local ruler and thus missed an opportunity of strengthening our position in the Yemen. For what we hope will be value [illegible] Agreement of 1938. At Muscat we have often been threatened by the rivalry of foreign Governments in the past, notably of France and Russia in the "nineties." [illegible] of war to visit that port. If these attempts were made when Muscat and Arabia were poor, what must we expect if they were to become rich.

7. No doubt the problem is one of considerable delicacy. I heard that the Sultan of Muscat, like most Arab rulers, was jealous of encroachments on his independence, at any rate in outward appearance. Probably, however, in their inward hearts most Arabs are conscious that they cannot stand internationally alone and prefer to be associated with and protected by the British and Indian Governments, whom they know to be territorially satisfied and with whose officials [illegible] ambitions of predatory Powers. In any steps to safeguard Arab States against

[illegible] which may soon become rapid an educational void were created, it would certainly have to be filled by us if it were not to be filled by others.

[illegible] perhaps still be summed up in words used by Lord Curzon, when speaking [illegible] Viceroy of India to the Trucial Chiefs in 1903, he said:

> "We have not destroyed your independe[illegible] We are not now going to throw away this centu[illegible] enterprise, we shall not wipe out [illegible], your independence will continue to be upheld, and the influence of the British Government must remain supreme."

The Royal Air Force

9. A third outstanding impression was of the importance of the Royal Air Force in these areas. For over three centuries it has been the proud task of the Royal Navy and the Indian Navy to gain and maintain for His Majesty's Government and the Government of India a commanding position in the Persian G[illegible] in the face of great political and climatic difficulties [illegible] Air Force can now co-operate, a[illegible] that the Royal Air Force should [illegible] has been well described as the Suez Canal of the air. A station is available at [illegible] blished at a large number of places [illegible] as Muscat and from there on to Aden. In Iraq, Transportan[illegible] it is clear that the Royal Air Force can and doubtless will play an important part in the maintenance of Br[illegible]

10. In addition to these three main impressions, it is perhaps worth while to mention here three minor matters.

Smuggling

11. On board the ship in which I travelled from Muscat to [illegible] At the tiny town of Sharja, with a population of less than 10,000 inhabitants having a very low standard of living, no less than 15 tons of coffee were unloaded. At Dubai, only 8 miles away, with a population between 30,000 and 40,000, consignments of coffee, pepper, tea, &c., were discharged up to a total of 150 tons. The steamer maintains a fortnightly service, which is doubtless supplemented by dhows, so that a strong presumption of smuggling was afforded, and nowhere did I hear any denial of this presumption. It was commonly believed that the smuggling took place chiefly over to the Persian side with the connivance of underpaid Iranian officials. I have not heard, however, that the Government of I[illegible] such as have, I believe, been brought from time to time against Koweit by Iraq and Saudi Arabia. [illegible]

Attitude towards Iraq

12. A matter of some interest to me was the attitude of the Arab States on the Gulf towards Iraq. Since Ibn Saud is ambitious and an immediate neighbour, it might have been inferred that the small independent States would look to Iraq for support against Saudi Arabia. I was told, on the contrary, that feel[illegible] towards Iraq [illegible] pretensions, its assertion of centralised government against its own local sheikhs, and its Effendi-ruling class at Bagdad, does not appeal to sheikhs, who st[illegible] they respect, and against possible Saudi expansionist ambitions British protection is felt to be adequate.

Air-Conditioning as an Aid to Efficiency

13. The value of air-conditioning in combating the disabling effects of extreme and prolonged heat was brought strongly home to me. When I asked officials of the Bahrein Oil Company how their American and British staff had withstood the climate I was informed that the incidence of sickness had at first been very high, but had been reduced to what was normal in America, chiefly it was believed, by the installation of air-conditioning On the Arabian mainland the American company had air-conditioned the quarters for all their American staff not only at the principal camp at Dhahran, but even in the small portable cabin dwellings in use during construction work at Ras Tanura. At Abadan the general manager of the Anglo-Iranian refinery, which provides its staff with cheap facilities for the use of air cooling apparatus told me that its installation was worth anything up to an extra two hours' useful work a day during the summer It is not only the wealthy oil companies who care for their staff in this way At Fao similar apparatus has been installed on most of the dredgers for the British staff and been found to contribute a great deal to their well being Such assistance for British officials elsewhere may have to await the conclusion of the war, but it will perhaps nevertheless, be helpful for those concerned to have the above evidence on record for the future

14 In conclusion, I wish to record my gratitude to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf and to the Political Agents, Mr Weightman at Bahrein and Captain Hickinbotham at Muscat, without whose assistance my tour would not have been possible Mr Weightman and Captain Hickinbotham invited Mr Man who accompanied me, and myself to be their guests and could not have done more to make my tour as enjoyable as it was both interesting and, I believe, instructive At Sharja on my outward and return journeys Captain Howes, the Assistant Political Agent temporarily stationed there, went out of his way to enable me to put the short time at my disposal to the best use

15 I am particularly indebted to the Royal Air Force, to Air Vice-Marshal [illegible], who made it possible for me to fly as far as Muscat, and to Wing [illegible] Thomson, who took Mr Man and myself as passengers. Without the advantage of this swift initial flight, a tour would have taken so long, or have afforded so little time at the two places of chief importance, that it would hardly have been feasible

16. I have sent copies of this despatch (without its lengthy enclosure) to the Political Resident at Bushire, the Air Officer Commanding at Habbaniya, His Majesty's Ambassador at Cairo (for the information also of the Combined Middle East Intelligence Centre) and to His Majesty's Ministers at Jedda and Tehran, to whom I have included the sections of my report headed "Muscat," "Bahrein" "Dhahran and the Coast of Musa" and "Ras Tanura, Safwa and Qatif"

17 For handiness of reference a small Imperial Airways map is attached (*)

I have, &c

BASIL NEWTON

(*) Not reproduced

[E 1636 1636/25] No. 57

Sir B Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received April 12)

No. 168)

Jedda, November 29 1939

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report on the present condition of Ibn Saud's armed forces so far as my meagre information will allow

2. As your Lordship is aware, the outbreak of the war decided Ibn Saud not to proceed with the arrangement by which he would have obtained from Germany 10,000 rifles and 10 million rounds of small arms ammunition, some as a gift and the rest on very favourable terms This must add considerably to the delay in the equipment of his forces with modern weapons, though whether he has forces that could do justice to such weapons if he had them is another matter

3. The plan announced by Ibn Saud in the summer of 1938, to form a large standing army trained on modern lines, has not proceeded very far Until recently there was assembled at Taif a force of 1,000 to 1,500 *nizam* or regular troops and eighty armed lorries, and it was reported that Hamdi Bey (No. 43 in

"Personalities") was to be sent to Abha, in Asir, to raise a force of 2,000 mo [illegible] which thirty-two carried two machine guns each with their crews (some of the [illegible] and each of the remaining eight carried some kind of field gun, whic [illegible] been dependent on the military flotsam of the old Turkish army part [illegible] There are at least two former general officers commanding now in subordinate positions A new general officer commanding has recently been appointed viz Muhammad Tariq al Afraq This man has the reputation of a good soldier [illegible] on training at the Constantinople Staff College, service in the Turkish [illegible] ask men, and even slaves, rise to high position, the other officers here are known to resent having to serve under him. There cannot at present be more than a handful of officers fit to train a force by the methods of 1941 let alone those of [illegible] throne, will make a serious attempt to put this agreement into effect. The [illegible] force of machine guns and guns it could hardly take the field against an [illegible] deal with an internal revolt Naturally, if trouble ever came to a head between Saudi Arabia and Iraq, other factors would have to be considered, *e.g.*, Ibn [illegible] forces, but I am at present dealing only with the regular army, since Ibn Saud [illegible] of the bodyguard, many of them slaves, of the King and the princes and the [illegible] camels What is certain is that the King puts less trust in them than [illegible]

5. Ibn Saud has always regarded his air force as necessary to [illegible] It is true that Ibn Saud has had difficulties [illegible] ; the lack of mechanics [illegible] proper budget which would [illegible] hension in high places of what is involved in any large technical undertaking

I am informed by the California Arabian Standard Oil Company that the [illegible] from the Hasa oil-field to Jedda for that part of the free supply of petrol to be provided by the California Arabian Standard Oil Company which will be needed in the Hejaz. The quantity is ridiculously small, the pipe-line from Iraq to the Mediterranean cost, I believe, about £30 million, and that was on the flat whereas from Hasa to the Hejaz the ground rises some 4,000 feet. I fear that in a country like this it will never be possible to maintain a proper air force though it may be just feasible if foreign mechanics and other supervisors are employed to keep enough machines going to scare would be rebels, if the pilots could learn to navigate accurately enough to find them.

6. The regular police or "Shurta" may be mentioned as constituting a small additional trained force. The "shurta" system is gradually being extended to include all the settled areas in the country. A year ago a force of these police was sent to the Hasa oilfield, while the police in Riyadh were modernised in costume if not in training, they were given as an intermediate [illegible] it consisting of a tunic with a skirt attached, but I [illegible] in the ordinary military costume of tunic [illegible] experience we have of police investigations in Jedda suggests that the im[illegible] penalties meted out to such criminals as are detected rather than to the efficacy of police methods.

7. I am forwarding copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassadors at Cairo and Bagdad, to his Excellency the High Commissioner for Palestine and to the Middle East Intelligence Centre.

I have, &c.
R. W. BULLARD.

E 1663 160 25] No. 58

Sir M. Lampson to Viscount Halifax.—(Received April 14.)

(No. 221.)
(Telegraphic.) *Cairo, April 14, 1940.*

PRIME Minister informs me that Hafez Wahba, on behalf of Iraqi and Saudi Arabian Governments, has asked him to nominate Egyptian "engineer" to arbitrate between Iraqi and Saudi Arabian "engineers" in delimitation of Iraqi Saudi Arabian frontiers.

2. Prime Minister seemed to insist on the technical nature of the job by stressing the word "engineers."

3. On general grounds it may be undesirable that the Egyptian should get too much mixed up in Arabian affairs, but I cannot think of any grounds on which we could reasonably object.

4. Please see in this connexion second paragraph of Jedda telegram No. 13 to you.

(Repeated to Bagdad, No. 13; Jedda, No. 9, and Jerusalem, No. [19] Saving.)

E 1663 166 25] No. 59

Viscount Halifax to Sir M. Lampson (Cairo).

(No. 190.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, April 18, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 221 [of 14th April: Proposed arbitration by an Egyptian in Saudi-Iraqi frontier dispute]

[illegible] selection of an Egyptian for this task, you need raise no objection.

(Addressed to Cairo, No. 199. Repeated to Jedda, No. 36; Bagdad, No. 97 and Saving; Jerusalem.)

E 1741 252 25] No. 60

Mr. Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received April 18.)

(No. 68.)
(Telegraphic.) *Jedda, April 18, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 33.

Ibn Saud is deeply grateful for the suggested arrangement. He asks that—

1. £120,000 may be placed to credit of Haj Ibrahim Yussuf Lemal Ali Riza in National Bank of India in Bombay.
2. £40,000 be credited to Messrs. Gellatly, Hankey and Company (Limited) account with National Provincial Bank of London.

Former amount will be used to pay for food-stuffs, of which quantity is on order; latter for purchases through Gellatly, Hankey and Company (Limited) [illegible] telegram No. 44.

E 1730 207 25] No. 61

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received April 19.)

(No. 30. Saving.)
(Telegraphic.) *En clair.* *Bagdad, April 9, 1940.*

SAUDI Minister in Bagdad, Sheikh Hamza Ghanth, has left for Riyadh, and Hafiz Wahba told me in confidence this morning that Ibn Saud intended to appoint him as Minister to Rome. He would not, however, proceed to his post for about three months in case there was any departure from Italian neutrality, with which Ibn Saud would not wish to seem to be in any way connected.

2. The Minister for Foreign Affairs, on the other hand, would have me believe that he so impressed Ibn Saud by what he told him of Hamza Ghanth's intrigues with Grobba that His Majesty declared that he would not send him to Rome.

(Repeated to Jedda, No. 12, by telegraph.)

E 1774 166 25] No. 62

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received April 22.)

(No. 163.)
My Lord, *Bagdad, April 13, 1940.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 113 of the 8th April informing your Lordship of the account given to me by Sheikh Hafiz Wahba of the results of the visit of the Minister for Foreign Affairs to Abdul Aziz al Saud, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a cutting from the *Iraq Times* of the 8th April containing a translation of an official communiqué issued by the Department of Press and Propaganda on the previous day.

2. The Minister for Foreign Affairs, who returned with Hafiz Wahba on the 8th April, left Bagdad for Basra in the evening of the same day, but he was good enough to find time to visit me at the embassy shortly before his departure. He confirmed generally the account which had been given to me by Hafiz Wahba and added that the Cabinet had that morning approved the report of his meeting with King Ibn Saud. The text of this document was published in the press on the 10th April and a translation forms the second enclosure to this despatch.

3. I understand from the Minister for Foreign Affairs that both sides have agreed that, in view of the settlement reached at Raudhah al-Tanhat, the two unratified agreements concerning grazing and watering and tribal nationality concluded in 1938 shall now be dropped.

4. The principal purpose of the Tribal Nationality Agreement was to dispose of the problems created by the Najdi Shammar in Iraq. This is now done by paragraph 2 (*a*) of the new accord, and in paragraph 2 (*b*) the Iraqi Government have obtained an undertaking that the Dhafir and Dahamsha tribesmen from Iraq who remain in Saudi Arabia shall be removed from the frontier.

As regards the Grazing Agreement, it would seem that paragraph 1 (iv) of the new settlement is intended to provide a means for the Saudi Government to communicate tax demands to their tribes grazing in Iraq and thereby to fulfil the main object of the unratified agreement

8. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's representatives at Cairo and Jedda and to the Combined Middle East Intelligence Centre, Cairo

I have, &c

BASIL NEWTON

Enclosure 1 in No 62

Extract from the Iraq Times *dated April* 8, 1940

THE following communiqué regarding the success of his Excellency Saiyid Nuri-as-Said's mission to Saudi Arabia was issued last night by the Department of Press and Propaganda

"The Iraqi delegation, led by his Excellency Saiyid Nuri-as-Said, Foreign Minister, reached the Saudi Royal tents at Rawdhat-al-Tanhat on the 4th April, and stayed there as the guests of His Majesty King Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud The delegation was received in audience by the King, and by their Royal Highnesses the Crown Prince (Amir Saud) and the Foreign Minister (Amir Faisal). Discussions took place on questions outstanding between the two countries in a friendly and cordial spirit, resulting in a complete agreement, the details of which will be published later An [illegible] desire to continue the policy of co-operation for the attainment of common ideals The Iraqi delegation left Rawdhat-al-Tanhat on the 7th April on its way back to Iraq"

Enclosure 2 in No 62

IN the course of the visit from the 4th-6th April of the Iraqi delegation, headed by his Excellency Nuri-as-Said, Minister for Foreign Affairs in the Iraqi Government, discussions were held between the two parties regarding the earnest desire of the Iraqi and Saudi Arabian Governments to strengthen and increase the bonds of friendship and goodwill which at present, through God's grace, unite the two sister countries. During the discussions an exchange of views and opinions took place in regard to the foreign policy of the two parties, and it was clearly evident that the policy of both parties was inspired by the spirit of brotherhood, co-operation and understanding established in the Treaty of Brotherhood and Alliance signed by them on the 2nd April, 1936 Both parties showed a desire for closer relations between the Arab States and for the friendly settlement of questions outstanding between the two countries They desired moreover, to establish full co-operation between their authorities on the basis of the Treaty of Friendship and Bon Voisinage of the 7th April, 1931

1 In furtherance of these desires, and in order to strengthen the friendly relations of the two countries and to broaden the basis of their co-operation in the service of the Arabs, it was agreed to settle outstanding tribal frontier questions on the following lines:—

(a) Each of the two parties shall appoint frontier officials in the frontier districts where public security is disturbed and concerning which the following has been agreed upon

(b) The frontier officials referred to in (a) above shall be vested with full powers in the following matters —

(i) The settlement of all questions relating to public security on the frontiers of the two countries within an area of 30 kilom. on either side of the frontier.

(ii) The adoption of necessary measures to prevent any action by a subject of one of the two parties likely to harm the good relations between the two countries (including propaganda against one of them)

(iii) The speedy settlement of questions relating to the theft or loss of camels and the grant of all possible facilities to those [illegible] officials, engaged in searching for them, whether they are the property of the Government or of private persons

(iv) Collaboration in informing the subjects of the two parties of the orders of their respective Governments

2.—(a) Members of the Najdi Shammar tribes who have emigrated to Iraq [illegible] the last few years [illegible] belonged to the Najdi frontier and shall be forbidden to settle or graze in Iraqi territory adjoining the frontier of the two countries. Exception shall be made in the case of persons who obtain the written consent of the Saudi Arabian Government to remain in the above mentioned area for the purpose of grazing and provisioning. Henceforth the emigration, whether temporary or permanent, of members of the above-mentioned tribe from Najd to this area shall be forbidden, except with the written consent of the Saudi Arabian Government

(b) Members of the [illegible] except with the written consent of the Iraqi Government

Rawdhat-al-Tanhat, Safar 28 (*April* 6, 1940)

[E 1756 309 91] No. 63

Sir B Newton to Viscount Halifax—(*Received April* 22)

(No 164 Confidential.)

My Lord,

Baghdad, April 15, 1940

I HAVE the honour to refer to my despatch No. 335 of the 1st July 1939, concerning the demarcation of the Koweit-Iraq frontier, and to offer the following further observations on this subject

2. It will be remembered that the p[illegible] despatch were put forward in response to your Lordship[illegible] with the Iraqi Government for the ex[illegible] Koweit and Iraq[illegible] mendations tend[illegible] demarc[illegible] wh[illegible]

3. [illegible]

4. [illegible] Qasr [illegible] Mr B[illegible] [illegible] Qasr [illegible] [illegible] and also in asking the [illegible] junction of the Khor Zubair with the [illegible]

Abdullah,"* which may be taken as the intersection of the deepest channel with the deepest channel of the Khor Bubiyan or as the intersection of the respective median lines, or be fixed in some other manner without reference to the comparatively small Khor Bubiyan at all

3. Of course, before any given interpretation of the boundary line can be implemented by demarcation it must be accepted by both Koweit and Iraq, but it seems clear that the initiative in bringing about the demarcation will have to be taken by His Majesty's Government and that the interpretation proposed by His Majesty's Government when taking this initiative is likely within certain limits to have considerable influence over both Iraq and Koweit. The effect which a final choice of a line could have on the Um Qasr scheme is apparent from a study of the map and of Sir John Ward's reports. Sir John favours a site for the port just below Um Qasr Creek and whether this site is in Koweiti or Iraqi territory depends on the manner in which the description of the frontier is interpreted. Moreover the important question of control of the approaches will also be influenced by the way in which the line is brought to, and continued from, the [illegible] which I enclose herewith, I would however point out that the Khor Zubair is only that part of the Khor which extends inland from the creek to the west known [illegible] given on the enclosed chart is [illegible] also described as [illegible] port at all or so as [illegible] Subject to these [illegible] re closely with [illegible] for all political [illegible] In the present [illegible] de to Iraq [illegible] gain to [illegible]

2. [illegible] should decide without further delay what are [illegible] frontier. In particular is it possible firstly to assign Um Qasr Creek, i.e. the creek west of the main Khor at Um Qasr either to Iraq or to Koweit? Secondly is it possible to assign a part of the Khor Um Qasr (or Khor Zubair) below Um Qasr Creek either to Iraq or to Koweit? Thirdly could it be divided between them by making the deepest navigable channel (or the median line) the frontier from a point east of Um Qasr to the junction of the Khor Um Qasr with the Khor [illegible]

8. Having [illegible] decide on the [illegible] to suit British interests [illegible] tions for approaching [illegible] initial suggestions. It [illegible] to influence the eventual frontier at points of crucial importance

9. I am sending copies of this despatch to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf [illegible] Koweit

I have, &c.
BASIL NEWTON

(*) Not reproduced

E 1801/227/25] No. 64

Mr Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax (Received April 25)

(No. 69.)
(Telegraphic.) *Jedda, April 23, 1940*

[GROUP undecipherable] Ibn Saud has sent me a message to the effect that on the conclusion of Saudi Koweit agreements he found it necessary to establish a post at Wafra in the neutral zone to facilitate collection of customs [illegible] of the establishment of this post, the political agent at Koweit had stated that His Majesty's Government and the Sheikh of Koweit could not permit it.

Ibn Saud is at a loss to understand why he should not establish a customs post in the neutral zone, it is not, he says, contrary to the intentions of the Uqair protocol and he would have no objection to the sheikh establishing such a post. Moreover, in the agreement recently concluded with Iraq provision is made for establishment by both parties of a customs post in their neutral zone.

The King pressed me for earliest possible reply, as he says that the matter is of urgent importance to him.

(Repeated to Bushire, No. 6, for Koweit, and group omitted], No. 1, Saving.)

E 1758/309/91] No. 65

Foreign Office to India Office

Sir, *Foreign Office, May 5, 1940*

WITH reference to India Office letter of the 30th January, I am directed by Viscount Halifax to transmit to you herewith, for the information of the [illegible] Bagdad regarding the proposed demarcation of the Koweit-Iraqi frontier.

2. Lord Halifax agrees with the view expressed by Sir Basil Newton that the wish of the Iraqi Government to develop a new port on the Khor Abdullah has lent further importance to the question of the frontier line in the neighbourhood of that inlet. In the circumstances, it certainly seems desirable that the [illegible] and, in view of the decision of the Sheikh of Koweit that he can contemplate no territorial cessions to Iraq, it is can clearly only be done on the basis of the definition of the existing frontier made by Sir Percy Cox in his letter to the Political Agent, Koweit, of the 19th July 1923.

3. It will be recalled that in his despatch No. 335 of the 1st July, 1939 (of which a copy was sent to the India Office with Foreign Office letter of the 28th July 1939), Sir Basil Newton enclosed the draft of a letter to the Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs, together with the draft of a note which it was [illegible] stated in the India Office letter under reference that Lord Zetland agreed [illegible] reluctant to cause further delay by suggesting at this stage any amendments to the draft notes in question. It seems to him, however, that certain alterations, both in the draft notes and in the explanatory formula itself, are desirable.

4. In the first place, in view of the importance which now attaches to the eastern part of the frontier, it seems preferable to advance in the draft note to the Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs, as the reason for which His Majesty's Government desire that the frontier shall be demarcated (if any reason has to be advanced at all), the need for avoiding disputes in connexion with the development of the new port on the Khor Abdullah, rather than the embarrassment which has been caused by incursions of Iraqi police into Koweiti territory. So far as Lord Halifax is aware, there have not in any case been any incidents of the kind for some time past, and since any references to them might arouse the susceptibilities of the Iraqi Government, this could, in his view, with advantage be omitted.

5. In the second place, it seems desirable to include both in the draft note to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and in the draft note from the Minister for

Foreign Affairs to the ambassador, the actual wording of Sir Percy Cox's definition of the frontier. If this is done, not only will the two notes be more readily intelligible in themselves, but it will also be self-evident why some elucidation of the existing definition is necessary before the work of demarcation can be started.

6. Thirdly, Lord Halifax has noted from the late Sir Trenchard Fowle's letter of the 1st August, 1939, to Mr. Peel (of which a copy was sent to the Foreign Office with India Office letter of the 19th August last), that there are in existence a post and board indicating the frontier on the track between Koweit and Zubair, south of Safwan. To determine the frontier at this point by a reference to the most southerly palm in Safwan has always seemed to his Lordship a somewhat unsatisfactory expedient, and he is of the opinion that it would be definitely preferable to adopt instead a reference to the existing post [illegible] ment or with the sheikh. Since this board is apparently less than one mile south of Safwan, his Lordship assumes that this suggestion will commend itself to Lord Zetland.

7. The next fixed point on the frontier is that described by Sir Percy Cox as the junction of the Khor Zubair with the Khor Abdullah. It will be recalled that in his despatch of the 1st July last Sir Basil Newton proposed that this should be defined as the junction of the thalweg of the Khor Zubair, with the thalweg of the north westerly arm of the Khor Shetana. In the enclosed despatch Sir Basil Newton points out that below Um Qasr the Khor Zubair is described on certain Admiralty charts as the Khor Um Qasr, and he therefore suggests that it will be more accurate to substitute Khor Um Qasr for Khor Zubair in this formula. Lord Halifax has noted that in the same charts the westerly part of the Khor Shetana is described as the Khor Sakan. Logically, therefore, it would be necessary to substitute the term "Khor Sakan" for the "Khor Shetana," if the Khor Um Qasr is substituted for the Khor Zubair. On the whole, however, his Lordship doubts whether it is necessary to adopt either of these names, since it seems to him that the meaning of the formula as incorporated in Sir Basil Newton's despatch of the 1st July is already sufficiently clear. Moreover, in view of the existence of the Um Qasr Creek, the use of the term "Khor Um Qasr" is likely to cause some confusion.

8. The most important point, however, to which I am to draw attention arises in connexion with the frontier between the two fixed points mentioned above (the point just south of the latitude of Safwan and the junction of the Khor Zubair with the Khor Shetana). The explanatory formula, as drafted by Sir Basil N[illegible] the relevant extract from Sir Percy Cox's definition reads as follows:—

> " [illegible] thence eastwards passing south of Safwan wells, Jabal Sakan and Um Qasr, leaving them to Iraq, and so on to the junction of the Khor Zubair with the Khor Abdullah."

This definition, although it specifically leaves Um Qasr to Iraq, does not seem to Lord Halifax to provide in itself an adequate basis for the demarcation of the frontier, since it is not even stated that the frontier shall follow the shortest line [illegible] imprecise nature of this definition was that at the time it was regarded as sufficient to make it clear that Um Qasr belonged to Iraq, and that the frontier should reach the thalweg of the Khor Abdullah at the junction of the Khor Zubair with the Khor Shetana. Be that as it may, some amplification now seems necessary and Lord Halifax can only suggest that, in order to avoid disputes, the frontier should be defined as following as far as possible the shortest line between [illegible] the Khor Shetana. It would not appear, however, that this definition could be [illegible] available maps, the shortest line between these two terminal points would not only cut across the Khor Zubair at its south-eastern extremity, but would even include part of the left bank of the Khor Zubair. It has never been suggested nor could the Iraq [illegible] inlet belongs to Koweit, while, as stated above, it is clearly the implication of Sir Percy Cox's definition that the frontier of Koweit shall not extend to the thalweg until the junction of the Khor Zubair with the Khor Shetana.

9. I am, therefore, to suggest that if the frontier is defined as being the shortest line between the two terminal points referred to above, it should be added that if this line shall be found, when followed on the ground, to strike the right bank of the Khor Zubair before it reaches the junction of the thalwegs of the Khor Zubair and the Khor Shetana, it shall be modified in such a manner as to follow from that point the low water line on the right bank of the Khor Zubair, thus leaving the whole of the Khor Zubair to Iraq. It seems clear that this was the least which article 7 of the Anglo-Ottoman Convention of the 29th July, 1913 (which forms the origin of Sir Percy Cox's definition), and the accompanying map were intended to give to Turkey. It is possible that the drafters of the [illegible] right bank of the Khor Zubair.

10. A redraft of the explanatory formula embodying the various suggestions made in this letter is enclosed herein. If Lord Zetland sees no objection to these [illegible] concurrence sought, so that the matter may be taken up with the Iraqi Government.

I am, &c.
LACY BAGGALLAY

Enclosure in No. 85

Redraft of Paragraph 2

2. The Iraqi Government propose that for this purpose the following interpretation shall be given to the frontier line described in the note referred to above:—

(1) "Along the Batin" the frontier line shall follow the thalweg, *i.e.* the line of the deepest depression.

(2) The "point just south of the latitude of Safwan" shall be the point on the thalweg of the Batin due west of the point a little to the south of Safwan, at which the post and notice-board at present marking the frontier have been erected.

(3) From the Batin to the neighbourhood of Safwan the frontier shall be a line along the parallel of latitude on which stands the above-mentioned point at which the post and notice-board have been erected.

(4) The "junction of the Khor Zubair with the Khor Abdullah" shall mean the junction of the thalweg of the Khor Zubair with the thalweg of the north westerly area of the Khor Abdullah known as the Khor Shetana.

(5) From the neighbourhood of Safwan to the junction of the Khor Zubair with the Khor Abdullah, the frontier shall be the shortest line between [illegible] graph (4). But if this line shall be found when followed on the ground to strike the right bank of the Khor Zubair before it reaches the point defined in sub-paragraph (4), it shall be modified in such a manner as to follow the [illegible] bank immediately opposite the point defined in sub-paragraph (4) is reached, thus leaving the whole of the Khor Zubair to Iraq.

(6) From the point defined in sub-paragraph (4) to the open sea the boundary shall follow the thalweg of the Khor Abdullah.

E 1972/718/91] No. 86

Extracts from a report by Lieutenant Colonel M. C. Lake, C.M.G., Political Secretary, Aden, on his visit to Sana'a to present gifts from His Majesty's Government to the King of the Yemen, princes, and officials on the occasion of the Festival of 'Id ul Azhar.—(Received from Colonial Office May 6.)

TO sum up my general impressions of Yemeni attitude, I found [illegible] knowledge that I was the bearer of presents influenced their feelings. But I do

[illegible] nk also that he is [illegible] the Treaty [illegible] e protectorate [illegible] ndence and [illegible]

He fears that certain foreign Powers, or perhaps I should say "a certain foreign Power," has designs on the Yemen, and he seeks Great Britain's friendship and assistance as I think that, however much he may enlarge on frontier incident expressing doubt about His Majesty's Government's intentions, he knows reality that Great Britain is just as determined to maintain Yemeni independence as he is desirous to do so. But there is also no doubt about his extreme feelings over Palestine and what he considers to be a breach of the *status quo* in the Eastern Protectorate. He probably realises that the Palestine problem must remain dormant during the present war and is resigned accordingly. But not so the protectorate frontier question.

Finally, about Italian influence in the Yemen, I confess that my visit was [illegible] ly a short one, and its brevity scarcely afforded me opportunity for recording a [illegible] ble that it was certainly on the wane, possibly because the Yemenis are now [illegible] prove a danger to Yemeni independence.

M. C. LAKE,
Political Secretary.

Note on an Audience with His Majesty the Imam, King of the Yemen, on January 31, 1940.

I FOUND His Majesty in excellent health, better than I have seen him before, and I told him that I was very pleased to see him so well. He confirmed that he was certainly better than before and that his rheumatism was easier, but he added that he did not always obey the doctor's orders. (This probably referred to his eating "Qat," which is forbidden to him.) He was also in very good form. After I had conveyed greetings from his Excellency the Governor, [illegible] Aden. He mentioned that he had sent a telegram to His Majesty King George VI asking that Sir Bernard may remain. I told His Majesty that the Governor was [illegible] It entirely responsible for the Governor's remaining in Aden.)

His Majesty then said that he had heard from Qadhi Muhammad Raghib that I was not visiting Sana'a for the purpose for which His Majesty had originally thought I was (namely, to discuss frontier differences). I replied that I was sorry that His Majesty was disappointed, but the object of my visit had been made clear in the telegram which had been sent to him. I then proceeded to tell His Majesty why I had come to Sana'a, and at the same time I offered him 'Id greetings on behalf of the Secretary of State and the Governor, apologising for [illegible] lateness. I then presented him with the gifts, and added that these were from [illegible] and the Yemeni Government. (I heard subsequently that the Imam was highly delighted with what he had received.) In expressing my regret at His Majesty's disappointment that I had not come to Sana'a to discuss frontier questions, I informed His Majesty that it was proposed to send Mr. Champion (whom, of course, he knew) to discuss these matters and that I hoped His Majesty would be receiving a notification from the Government very soon. The Imam expressed [illegible] pleasure at this, and also expressed how much he valued Great Britain's friend[illegible] Powers. He said that Great Britain had a reputation for good administration and for her

good treatment of Moslems, but he added that Great Britain had made two mistakes—Palestine and the Yemen. He then roared with laughter, in which we all joined. The Imam went on to say: "Why did Great Britain treat the Yemen like an enemy?" I asked His Majesty to make himself a bit clearer, and explain exactly what he meant. The Imam said that Great Britain always refused to help the Yemen in contrast to other foreign Powers. He referred especially to the fortification of Sheikh Said and Great Britain's refusal to assist the Yemeni Government in war materials. I replied, explaining the reason for our refusal saying that, although His Majesty's request was made before the war commenced, the threat of war was very imminent, and for this reason His Majesty's Government found it difficult to comply with his request. The Imam said: "I accept your explanation, but at the same time I consider it to be only an excuse. Great Britain is a very mighty Power and has plenty of war materials." I said: "Yes, Your Majesty, that is perfectly true in peace time, but in war one requires to maintain all that one has." He then said: "Well, at any rate, you might have let me have the wire-netting." I then mentioned the Imam's indirect recent request through Captain Seager to Qadhi Abdullah as Shami to purchase war [illegible] that his requests had been referred to His Majesty's Government and that the reply was awaited. The Imam seemed to receive this statement with a look of surprise, and gave me the impression that he knew little about it. His Majesty then referred again to Sheikh Said and said that Great Britain's refusal to assist the Yemeni Government had given him the impression that she had designs on this part of the Yemen. He added that he thought that it was to Great Britain's advantage that Sheikh Said should be strongly fortified. That France and Great Britain were at the present time friends and Allies, but one never knew what might be the case in the future, and, if France at any time became an enemy and took Sheikh Said, it would not be to Great Britain's advantage. I assured His Majesty that Great Britain never had had, and still does not have, any designs on Sheikh Said or at all on any part of the Yemen. His Majesty then repeated his opinion of Great Britain—that she was best of all foreign Powers—and said that it was possible that false news had been circulated about the Yemeni Government that she was in touch with certain other foreign Powers with a view to aggressive activities against Great Britain. But he assured me that Great Britain had nothing to fear from the Yemen. The Imam then got up in his usual abrupt manner and, after bidding me good bye in a very friendly manner, the audience terminated.

NOTE.—On His Majesty's departure, I remained, as usual, in the audience chamber for a short time with the Foreign Minister, Qadhi Muhammad Raghib. Qadhi Raghib compared His Majesty to a walnut, explaining that he was a hard nut to crack, but when one had pierced his shell, which, he added, could only be done by courtesy and consideration, he was easy enough to deal with. Raghib then emphasised the value of such visits as my own present one, and expressed the hope that they would be of frequent occurrence. I had already broached the subject of the date of my departure from Sana'a to Qadhi Raghib, mentioning the day on which I proposed to leave, and, as he escorted me down the passage to the door, he stopped and laid hold of my shoulder and said: "You will be permitted to leave on Saturday, provided that you promise to repeat your visit."

E 1983/166/25] No. 67

Mr. Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received May 7.)

(No. 40.)

My Lord, *Jedda, April 23, 1940.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith a translation of an "official communiqué," No. 53 published in the *Umm-ul Qura* newspaper on the 12th April, 1940, concerning the result of the recent negotiations between the Iraqi and the Saudi Arabian Governments on frontier matters.

2. I am requesting the Saudi Arabian Government to furnish me with an official copy of the Arabic text of this agreement, and will forward it to your Lordship when received, together with a new translation if necessary.

Meanwhile, the translation now sent, though unofficial, will no doubt serve to indicate the main lines of the agreement.

3. I am sending copies of this despatch and of its enclosure to His Majesty's Ambassador at Bagdad, the Middle East Intelligence Centre and to the Political Intelligence Department of the Foreign Office.

I have, &c.

F. H. W. STONEHEWER BIRD.

Enclosure in No. 67.

Copy in Translation of Official Communiqué No. [illegible]

Royal Camp at Rondat-el-Tenhat,
Safar 28, 1359 (April 6, 1940).

BETWEEN the 26th and 28th Safar, 1359 (the 4th and 6th April, 1940) negotiations took place between the Iraqi delegation under the presidency of his Excellency al Sayyid Nuri al Said, the Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs, and the Saudi Government in respect of the true desire of the two Governments to strengthen and develop the friendly and brotherly relations existing, by the Grace of God, between the two sisterly kingdoms. They exchanged views about their foreign policy, which has so clearly been derived from the spirit of brotherhood, co-operation and understanding contained in the Treaty of Brotherhood and Alliance concluded between them on the 10th Muharram, 1355 (the 2nd April, 1936), and from their desire to unite the Arab nation [illegible] co-ordinate their attitude and settle outstanding matters between the two kingdoms in a spirit of affection and friendship, and to organise the general co-operation between their authorities which was provided for in the Treaty of Friendship and "Bon Voisinage" concluded on the 20th Dhu'l Quada, 1349 (the 7th April, 1931).

In confirmation of the above, and in order to maintain friendly relations between the two kingdoms, and develop their co-operation in favour of the Arabs, the following agreement has been concluded between them for the settlement of outstanding matters concerning frontier tribes on the under mentioned basis:—

Firstly.—Each of the two parties shall appoint frontier officials in zones which will be agreed upon later, and in which breaches of the peace often occur.

Secondly.—The frontier officials referred to in paragraph (1) shall be granted full authority in connexion with the following matters:—

(1) The settlement of all outstanding matters relating to peace on the frontiers of the two kingdoms up to a distance of 30 kilom. from the frontier on each side.

(2) Taking the necessary steps for preventing any of the subjects of the two parties from taking any action which may disturb the relations prevailing between the two kingdoms, including the performance of propaganda against either party.

(3) Prompt settlement in cases of lost or robbed camels and granting all possible facilities to the herdsmen, trackers and others who may search for the camels, whether those camels belong to the Government or to individuals.

(4) Co-operation in respect of communicating to the subjects of the two parties the orders of their Governments.

Thirdly.—(1) The tribesmen of the Shammar of Nejd who emigrated to I[illegible] from residence and grazing in the Iraqi territories bordering the two kingdoms with the exception of persons permitted in writing by the Saudi Arabian Government to remain in the said territory for grazing and provisioning. The temporary or permanent emigration of the men of the said tribe from Nejd to that zone will be thereafter prohibited except under a written authorisation from the Saudi Arabian Government.

(2) The men of al Zafeer and al Dabamisha tribes who adopt Saudi Arabian nationality cannot remain in the said zone for grazing except under a written authorisation from the Iraqi Government.

[E 734 227 25] No. 68

Viscount Halifax to Mr. Stonehewer-Bird (Jedda).

(No. 91.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, May 16, 1940.

WITH [illegible], I transmit to you herewith a Governmental Full Power to enable you to sign for His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in their own name and on behalf of the Sheikh of Koweit the three agreements concerning friendship and neighbourly relations, extradition of offenders and trade, which were recently negotiated with the Government of Saudi Arabia.

2. I understand that copies of the relevant correspondence indicating the final amendments in the draft texts of the agreements which were enclosed in my despatch No. 253 of the 23rd November, 1939, have been sent to you direct by the political agent at Koweit, and I should be glad if you would now arrange with the Saudi Arabian Government to have the texts of the three agreements formally prepared for signature. Copies of the complete texts of the three agreements in what I assume, from the reports received from the political agent at Koweit, to be the form finally agreed upon have been made in this Department and are enclosed herein (1).

3. The notes to be exchanged about the tribes might well, I consider, be amended as shown in the redraft which will be found in its proper place in the [illegible] these suggestions are given in the accompanying copy of a minute by the T[illegible]

4. Before you actually sign the agreements, I should be glad if you [illegible] agreement, and also that they have accepted the Foreign Office redrafts of the second of the exchange of letters to be attached to that agreement.

5. You should report to me by telegram the actual date of signature of the three agreements.

I am, &c.

HALIFAX.

(1) Not printed.

E 2111 2055 25] No. 69

Mr. Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received June 7.)

(No. 77. Confidential.)

(Telegraphic.)

Jedda, June 7, 1940.

IBN SAUD has sent me a message of condolence on the reverses recently suffered. He prays and hopes for final victory of the Allies. He asks that if I receive any intimate information I will communicate it to him. By this he meant information as regards Italian intervention, for Acting Minister of Finance asked me immediately after delivery of this message if and when Italy would enter the war and what forces Allies had in the Red Sea. I replied, while statements in the press and on air and pronouncements by leading Italians pointed to Italy's entry in the near future, there seemed to me to be still some slight hope that she was bluffing. As regards the Allied forces, I could give him no information, but competent authorities were certainly fully alive to the [illegible] Red Sea [illegible] necessary action. I asked Faisal Suleiman to convey to His Majesty an expression of my appreciation of his message. As Mr. Churchill had told the British people, we had suffered a severe initial reverse, but were confident of final issue.

(Repeated to Cairo (for Middle East Intelligence Centre), No. 24.)

[E 2109 2029 65] No. 70

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received June 7.)

(No. 223.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, June 6, 1940.*

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs informed me on 4th June that he had discussed with Yusuf Yasin relevance to present situation of article 4 of Arabic Treaty of Alliance, 1936.

1. He had suggested that if Italy entered the war and Iraqi Government broke off relations with the Italian Government or even declared a state of war to exist between the two countries, Iraq could not invoke the help of Saudi Arabia [illegible] bombs on Iraq or committed some other act of war against Iraq then the Iraqi Government would expect Saudi Arabia to declare war on the aggressor and to come to the aid of Iraq. Yusuf Yasin had accepted this interpretation of the treaty position and had telegraphed to Ibn Saud for confirmation.

2. In reply Amir Faisal, as Minister for Foreign Affairs, had sent a letter [illegible] was prepared to co-operate with Iraq in all circumstances at no matter what cost in blood or treasure, and to give a solemn pledge that in the event of any [illegible] of the letter follows by bag.)

[illegible] Arabic Alliance, 1936, referred to consultation, it had always been understood between the two Governments that it really meant mutual assistance.

4. Before collaborating with Syria, Yusuf Yasin had also told me of these talks and had sent me a copy of Amir Faisal's letter enquiring whether I thought it would be advantageous to publish it, but I deferred reply until I could consult with the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Nuri Pasha's view is that it would do harm to publish the letter now as it would irritate Iran and alarm Iraqi public. He agreed, however, that the publication at some stage might do good as a pro-Ally gesture and as a demonstration of the solidarity of the two countries.

It occurred to me that the occasion might arise if Italy enters the war. Considerations outside the immediate interests of Iraq are, however, clearly involved, and I should be glad of your instructions as to the advice to be given to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and to Yusuf Yasin.

(Repeated to Jeddah, No. 18, and Cairo, No. 17, Saving (for Middle East Intelligence Centre).)

E 1801 227 25] No. 71

Viscount Halifax to Mr. Stonehewer Bird (Jedda).

No. 49.)
Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June 8, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 60 (of 23rd April: Ibn Saud's desire to establish customs post at Wafra.)

[illegible] pass that way, and (*b*) Ibn Saud could establish a post in Saudi territory close to southern boundary where there is water.

2. For your own information: sheikh's main objection is his suspicion that Ibn Saud's real object is to undermine the *status quo* in neutral zone and force his hand over oil negotiations.

3. The sheikh is very tenacious of his rights in neutral zone, and it would be very difficult to convince him that they would not be prejudiced by Saudi proposal. On the other hand, wording of Uqair Protocol is vague and you will see from Mr. Eyres's letter of 29th April to India Office that position is such that, in absence of mutual agreement His Majesty's Government might have to advise the sheikh to assent to Ibn Saud's proposal if, on further consideration the necessity of the proposal were clearly established and sheikh's objections thereto should appear unreasonable and vexatious.

4. In the circumstances, you should, if you see no objection, inform Ibn Saud that the sheikh, for the reasons given at (*a*) and (*b*) above, cannot see necessity for a post at Wafra and is opposed to its establishment. With the information at their disposal, His Majesty's Government find it difficult to press him to reconsider his view, especially as no suggestion was made during the lengthy negotiations for the trade agreement that any control post would be required in neutral zone. You may also explain difficulties that might arise if customs posts were established in the neutral zone (see, *e.g.*, paragraph 6 of Mr. Eyres's letter), and enquire whether it would not be possible for Ibn Saud to have a post or posts on his own side of the boundary of the neutral zone, as suggested by the sheikh.

(Repeated to Bushire, No. 2, and Koweit, No. 1.)

E 2111 2063 25] No. 72

Viscount Halifax to Mr. Stonehewer Bird (Jedda).

No. 54. (Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June 12, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 77 of 7th June (Effect of Italian intervention in the war on Saudi Arabia.)

Please express to Ibn Saud His Majesty's Government's warm appreciation of his sympathetic message, and assure him that confidence of the Allies in their final victory remains unimpaired by initial German successes.

2. As regards Italian intervention in the war, see my telegram No. 55 (of 12th June.)

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 447 (for M.I.C.E.).)

E 2060 2060 25] No. 73

Viscount Halifax to Mr. Stonehewer Bird (Jedda).

No. 55. (Secret.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June 12, 1940.*

YOU will remember that when Ibn Saud has sought advice from His Majesty's Government in past about possible Italian aggression, their replies have been coloured by belief that Italy would have nothing to gain from military point of view by landings on the Saudi Arabian coast in event of Anglo-Italian hostilities. See in this connexion my telegram No. 69, of the 27th April, 1939, and my telegrams Nos. 9 and 11 of the 30th January, 1940.

2. Recent events in Europe suggest, however, that Italian Government might think it worth while landing native agents and small bodies of mobile troops, even if they had to abandon them subsequently, with object of causing as much alarm and distraction and disaffection as they could manage before being dealt with. Conditions in Arabia are obviously quite different from those in Northern Europe, and it is not suggested that Italian technique would necessarily follow the German. But underlying principles might be the same.

3. I must leave it to you to judge whether warning to this effect could be [illegible] counter any such attempts if the danger were brought to their notice. You may [illegible] believe in advance that Italians can raid Saudi Arabia with impunity. But if [illegible] attention to what has happened elsewhere, and suggest that such advance measures as are possible should be taken to counter it.

4. Since the Saudi Arabian Government will no doubt enquire what His Majesty's Government could do in that case to protect and assist them, it may help you to know that possibility of such landings has been foreseen in dispositions made for His Majesty's ships in Red Sea. Admiralty cannot guarantee that small parties here and there might not slip through the net, but they are satisfied that they will, from the outset, have such control of the Red Sea as would render difficult further maintenance of such parties. Moreover, His Majesty's Government would probably find it necessary to mop up any party which succeeded in

establishing itself at some point on the Saudi Arabian coast, in order that the free passage of the Red Sea should not be threatened or interrupted

5. You should therefore, be careful to avoid giving the impression that His Majesty's ships in the Red Sea could afford absolute protection for Saudi Arabia from such raids. But, subject to this, you may repeat the assurances already given in the communications referred to in paragraph 1, and add that His Majesty's Government [illegible] Italian threat in mind

(Repeated to Bagdad, No 215, and Cairo, No. 448 (for M I C E))

E 2109 2109 25] No. 74

Viscount Halifax to Sir B Newton (Bagdad)

(No 214)
(Telegraphic) *Foreign Office, June 12, 1940*

YOUR telegram No 223 (position of Iraq and Saudi Arabia when Italy enters the war)

While the idea of publishing Amir Faisal's letter need not be dismissed, I consider that its publication in present circumstances would serve no useful purpose

2. It is important that Iraqi and Saudi Arabian Governments should know [illegible] when the need arises. But the material assistance which Saudi Arabia could give [illegible] herself open to attack by Italy, which it would need all her forces to repel (geographically she is more exposed than Iraq to invasion or bombing from Italian territory, and it will be to her own advantage and to advantage of Iraq that she should endeavour to maintain neutrality, at any rate for the time being

3. You should, therefore, advise Minister for Foreign Affairs and (if he returns) Sheikh Yusuf Yasin to refrain from publishing letter in present circumstances The two Governments should consult together immediately in accordance with provisions of article 2 of Treaty of Alliance, upon the interpretation of which I offer no comment, but it would be disadvantageous to both to commit Saudi Arabia actually to take up arms unless the situation renders it imperative

4. For your own information, it might in certain circumstances (*e g*, if the Yemen threw in its lot with Italy and lent its territory for a land attack on Aden) be an advantage to have the assistance of Saudi Arabia for an attack on the Yemen from the north But even in these circumstances Saudi Arabia might be more of a liability than an asset as an ally. The subsidies which she would have to receive could probably be spent to better advantage in the United States, and it would be very difficult to give her armed support Moreover, His Majesty's Government could not offer Ibn Saud any territorial compensation except in the Yemen itself These views are entirely provisional, as the whole question will have to be considered afresh by the departments concerned in the light of present and future developments. But you should, in the meanwhile at any rate, not encourage the idea of Saudi intervention in the war

5 See also in this connexion my telegram No 54 to Jedda

(Repeated to Jedda, No. 53 and Cairo, No. 446)

E 2111 2033 25] No 75

Mr Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax —(Received June 13)

(No 87 Confidential)
(Telegraphic) *Jedda June 13 1940*

MY telegram No 77

Italy's declaration of war has disgusted local opinion, which if not wholeheartedly pro-ally is entirely anti Italian

2. The King is said to be perfectly confident of the Allies' ability to deal with the Italians

3. I cannot, however urge too strongly that the maintenance of British prestige in Saudi Arabia depends on speedy and decisive action resulting in return to normal transport facilities between India and this country and the maintenance of regular sailings of Pharao [group undecypherable] mail steamers

4 In this connexion the Amir Faisal sent me early this morning an urgent message begging me to request the authorities at Aden to do all in their power to ensure the arrival of the steamship *Jehangir*, which is carrying a consignment of money and food stuffs urgently required, the arrival of which has been delayed for several weeks.

5. The slightly resentful attitude of Kaimakam who communicated Amir Faisal's message to me is doubtless unreasonable, but until such time as the Red Sea is again free it must be expected in increasing measure from all classes who can only view the war from the standpoint of their own personal interests I urged patience and said the blame for any temporary inconvenience to this country must be laid not at our door but at that of the self-styled Protector of Islam.

(Repeated to Cairo, No 26 (for M I C E), Bagdad, No. 28, Aden, No. 5; the Government of India, No 24, Khartum, No 2)

E 2109 2029 65] No. 76

Mr Stonehewer-Bird to Viscount Halifax —(Received June 14)

(No [illegible]
Telegraphic) *Jedda, June 14 1940*

YOUR telegram No. 53

If I may say so without impertinence, I entirely agree with the views expressed. Ibn Saud's reliable assistance to us is in the moral field where his attitude of benevolence towards us must have its effect on Moslem world opinion He has shown no signs of wishing to depart from strict neutrality or to profit by the present situation to ask for a subsidy

(Repeated to Bagdad, No. 30, and Cairo (for M I C E))

E 2060 2060 25] No. 77

Mr Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax —(Received June 24)

(No 112)
(Telegraphic) *Jedda June 24, 1940.*

I HAVE had two long interviews with Amir Faisal, who arrived at Jedda on 22nd June for a week's stay

2. On the subject of Italy Amir showed no nervousness whatsoever [illegible] thing in this country of a military nature. Asked whether he thought Italy might try to introduce agents and carry on intrigues, he replied that, even if they did such intrigues would, he could assure me, have no success Every Arab hated the Italians and for one curse Hitler received Mussolini received a thousand He was delighted at (I news) of capture of an Italian submarine by a British trawler His comment on wounding of two Alexandria Italians in the recent Italian raid was, "Thank God but a pity they were not killed." (Four groups undecypherable) I did not want group undecypherable) visit by speaking of possible landings As he did not approach the question of British forces in Red Sea, I presume Ibn Saud is satisfied on that score by what I said in my interview with Acting Minister of Finance (please see my telegram No. 77) There was thus no need to reiterate assurances referred to in your telegram No. 55

3. [illegible]

Repeated [illegible] No. 39 [illegible] No. 30 and Jerusalem No. 62

E 2109 2029 65] No. 78

Sir B Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received June 27.)

(No 258.)

My Lord, *Baghdad, June 7, 1940*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 223 of the 6th June, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a translation of Amir Feisal's letter to the Minister for Foreign Affairs promising support to Iraq

2. General Nuri Said explained to me that the first paragraph of this letter refers to a communication which he had sent to Amir Feisal on the subject of the measures that were being taken by the Iraqi Government to give effect to the several agreements reached when he visited King Ibn Saud near Riyadh in April (my despatch No. 163 of the 13th April). The second paragraph con[illegible] the assurance of full support and help in the event of Iraq's becoming a victim of an act of war which was given by King Ibn Saud at the instance of Sheikh Yusuf Yasin after his recent talks in Bagdad

3. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's representatives at Cairo and Jedda and to the combined Middle East Intelligence Centre, Cairo.

I have &c

BASIL NEWTON

Enclosure in No. 78

Amir Feisal to the Minister for Foreign Affa[illegible]

After compliments, *Ministry for Foreign Affairs*

Dear Sayyid Nuri al Said, *Mecca, May 24, 1940*

W[illegible] other concern[illegible]tation of [illegible] H[illegible] M[illegible] appreciation and his feelings of sympathy and affection for Iraq and its people [illegible] country in all circumstances, whether happy or unhappy, and at no matter [illegible] forbid, of any misadventure occurring to Iraq in the present dangerous circumstances. Iraq can rely upon his Majesty, next to God, for all such assistance as shall be in his power to give

I have great pleasure in availing myself of this opportunity to convey to your Excellency an expression of my regard and esteem.

May God preserve you

E 2211 56 11] No. 79

Telegram from the King of the Yemen the Imam Yahya, to the King Emperor His Majesty George VI the Glorious, London.—(Received June 29, 1940)

(Translation from Arabic.)

FROM the kernel of my sincere heart I thank your honourable presence for your great kindnesses which are without doubt a proof of your Majesty's virtu[illegible] the two countries for ever

[illegible] sincere servant in the [illegible] of his sorrow and suffering, protest and affirm to your Imperial and Glorious person that your representative, Mr Champion, is very far from carrying out your high Royal commands and [illegible] aggressive baseness on the part of the Government of Aden [illegible] right, and Mr Champion arrogates to himself the [illegible] uness of your Majesty that you will [illegible] kingdom, which are firm, clear and well [illegible] return of the possessions of my fathers and ancestors which the Government of Aden took by superior force, by armed aggression five years after the

FO 406/78

making of the treaty of loving alliance and friendship between the two countries. Your sincere servant cannot keep his people and his conscience quiet, your Majesty never wishes the terms of the treaty of love and friendship to lead to seizing by force and hostility to us by some officers at the direction of those who are greedy for personal fame and who aim at causing bad blood and strife between the two countries.

I again protest to your respected, honoured and glorious person and I expect from your Majesty only the restoration of the right of my country which has been taken from it; I cannot let my claim be disregarded(*) now two years have passed and I am still waiting.

Your Majesty accept my most sincere and true respects to your beloved Royal person and your noble and glorious family (wife). I hope for pardon for my claim, I am under compulsion and constraint

(*) Probably does not sound so harsh in the original.—TRANSLATOR

[E 2203/2203/25] No. 80

THE SOUTH EASTERN FRONTIERS OF SAUDI ARABIA

[With Maps.]

THE origins of the dispute(*) between His Majesty's Government and the Saudi Arabian Government about the south-eastern frontiers of Saudi Arabia date back to the years 1913-14, when the south-eastern boundaries of the Ottoman Empire (which was regarded as including Hasa, Nejd, the Hejaz, Asir and the Yemen) were fixed by provisions embodied in the Anglo-Turkish Conventions of the 29th July, 1913, and the 9th March, 1914. The agreed boundaries were the so-called Blue and Violet lines. The Blue line started from a point on the Persian Gulf opposite Zakhunniyah island (which lies to the South of the Bahrein archipelago) and ran due south to the 20th parallel of latitude in the middle of the Rub-al Khali. The Violet line ran north-east "at an angle of 45°" from a place called Lakmat-ash-Sh'ab, about 75 miles north of Aden, to the point of intersection of the Blue line and the 20th parallel. Lakmat-ash-Sh'ab lies at the eastern end of a frontier between the Aden Protectorate and Ottoman territory laid down in the years 1903 and 1905(†) and confirmed in the Convention of the 9th March, 1914. The western end of this frontier meets the sea at the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb opposite Perim Island

2. The two Anglo-Turkish Conventions were signed (and that of 1914 ratified) subsequent to the eviction of the Ottoman garrisons by Ibn Saud from their last hold in the Sanjak of Nejd in May 1913 (he was then a tribal chieftain fighting for power in Central Arabia). Their terms were not communicated at the time to Ibn Saud or to any other third party. Meanwhile, in May 1914 Ibn Saud himself concluded a treaty with the Ottoman Government, by which he was accorded the title of Vali of Nejd in return for an acknowledgment that he was an Ottoman subject and the servant of the Ottoman Government. No mention was made in the Conventions of the sovereignty of the territory to the east and south of the Blue and Violet lines except that the Blue line was stated to separate the Ottoman Sanjak of Nejd from the territory of El Katr (Qatar). But it was clearly territory in which His Majesty's Government were thereafter free, so far as the Ottoman Empire was concerned, to extend their influence and authority

3. The frontier question, which had, in its larger issues, lain dormant since 1914, was raised indirectly in November 1922, when Sir Percy Cox, the High Commissioner in Mesopotamia, met Ibn Saud at Ojair in order to induce him to ratify the Treaty of Muhammerah of the 5th May 1922, regulating frontier and other questions between Iraq and Nejd. The particular point involved was the boundaries of Qatar. Sir Percy had had no intention of entering upon a discussion of these boundaries, but he discovered that Ibn Saud proposed to grant

E 979/379 91 (1931)

(*) The legal aspects of this question, and the policy of His Majesty's Government in regard to it, are discussed in a separate memorandum entitled "Ibn Saud's Claims in respect of the South Eastern Frontiers of Saudi Arabia." E 2205/2203/25; June 30, 1940, Confidential Number 15997. The present note is intended only as a summary of the history of the dispute for purposes of future reference

(†) The dispute with of the Aden Protectorate and "The Frontiers of the Aden Protectorate" Eastern Affairs Arabia Part XIII Nos 8 and 13

to a body called the Eastern and General Syndicate a concession over an area including the whole of the Hasa Province of Nejd and the Qatar peninsula. The south western and southern boundaries of this area were (according to a map produced at the meeting) to be a line drawn down the Wadi Faruk as far as Djau Dukhan (about latitude 24° North by longitude 49° East and not to be confused with Jebel Dukhan in the Qatar peninsula) and from there eastward to Khor ad Dhawa'ihin and the sea. On seeing that the proposed line included Qatar in the concession area the High Commissioner re drew on the map a line from the head of the Khor el Odeid to the heart of the Dohat as Salwa, at the southern end of the Gulf in which lies the Bahrein archipelago, and gave it as his opinion that this was the proper line of the Qatar Nejd frontier. He explained to Ibn Saud that in no circumstances would it be possible for him to include in a concession any of the country lying to the East of Anbak or Mahal (about 25 miles due south of the southern tip of the Dohat as Salwa) and there is some reason to think that he may have illustrated this point by drawing a second line from the neighbourhood of the Khor el Odeid in a south western direction into the centre of Arabia leaving Anbak on its southern side. The lines proposed by Sir Percy Cox would have given Ibn Saud a considerable amount of territory lying east of the Blue line, as well as depriving him of some territory to the west of it, but Sir Percy stated in 1934 that he was certain that the Blue line was never mentioned at the Ojair meeting and that it seemed to him that His Majesty's Government could therefore still maintain that this line was the proper eastern boundary of Ibn Saud's territory.

E 3361/279/91 (1934).

4. Apart from the discussion at Ojair the question remained quiescent till 1934 when it again came to the fore as a result of the new situation created by competition for oil concessions on the southern shore of the Persian Gulf. The development by the Standard Oil Company of California of their oil concession in Hasa, which had by that time become part of the Kingdom of Saud Arabia created by Ibn Saud, as well as negotiations he were the Anglo Persian Oil Company and the Sheikh of Qatar caused His Majesty's Government to undertake a closer examination of the frontiers in this region in order that matters to check any tendency on the part of Ibn Saud to extend his rule over territories within the British sphere of influence to the east of the Blue line. At about the same time the United States Embassy at Angora enquired of His Majesty's Embassy there the extent of the boundaries of Saud Arabia as the question had acquired importance to the American interests concerned in the oil concession.

5. Since Ibn Saud's rise to power no special agreement had been concluded between him and His Majesty's Government defining the boundaries of his territory in the east and south east and it was discovered that he had never been acquainted with the existence of the Anglo Turkish Conventions of 1913 14. It was decided however that, as the 1914 Convention defining both the Blue and Violet lines had been ratified, it was legally binding on Ibn Saud in his capacity of successor to the Ottoman Empire. The view was consequently taken at the time that while the territories of the local Arab rulers under British protection in eastern and southern Arabia (i.e., the Trucial Sheikhs, of which the one with the largest nominal territory is the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi, the Sultan of Muscat and Oman and the rulers and tribes of the Aden Protectorate) did not necessarily extend westward and northward to the Blue and Violet lines, the area south and east of those lines must be regarded as a British sphere of influence. Subsequently a reply to this effect, couched in the least provocative terms possible was sent to the United States Embassy at Angora. It was considered advisable to inform the Saudi Arabian Government of the American enquiries, and a note addressed by His Majesty's Legation at Jedda to the Saudi Arabian Government on the 28th April 1934 gave the substance of His Majesty's Government's reply.

E 3362/279/91 (1934).

6. The United States Government apparently accepted the explanation and nothing further has been heard from them on the subject. But Ibn Saud refused with some warmth to accept the frontier laid down in the Anglo Turkish Conventions as legally valid on the ground that the Ottoman Government had no right to dispose of his ancestral home land. His reply was contained in a note dated the 13th May 1934 from the Saudi Arabian Government. In this note they refused to admit that the 1913 14 Conventions had any relevance but expressed willingness to discuss the question further. A restatement of the British thesis in a note of the 15th June elicited a more reasoned statement of the Saudi case in a note of the 20th June in which it was argued that the Ottoman Government could have had no *locus standi* in the matter after Ibn Saud's

E 3363/279/91 (1934).

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occupation of Hasa on the 13th April, 1913. The Saudi Arabian Government further invoked the first Anglo-Saudi Treaty of the 29th December 1915 by which His Majesty's Government had undertaken to recognize Ibn Saud's sovereignty over the dominions of his ancestors, and intimated that they had very far-reaching claims regarding the extent of these dominions. It thus became evident that, if His Majesty's Government were to maintain their point of view, a very considerable dispute would arise.

7. Moreover, after further examination of the legal position it was felt that the Blue and Violet lines did not, as hitherto supposed, mark a division between two areas under clearly defined sovereignties; for a considerable portion of the territory to the east and south of these lines was under no effective sovereignty, and was for the most part desert country inhabited by tribes owing in practice a vague allegiance to Ibn Saud alone, which might therefore be regarded as a political vacuum or *res nullius* in law. It became apparent that, while in principle the Blue and Violet lines were a valid boundary, they could not preclude the Saudi Arabian Government from advancing reasonable claims on the ground of effective occupation *since 1914*, to territory beyond these lines where no other ruler exercised authority. Considerable areas east and south of these lines were thus open to acquisition or occupation by Ibn Saud. In fact, he had already some years previously established permanent settlements to the east of the northern end of the Blue line, whereas none of the Trucial Sheikhdoms on the coast of the Persian Gulf nor the Sultan of Muscat could possibly claim to exercise authority so far west as the Blue line.

8. It was consequently decided to abandon a rigid adherence to the Anglo-Ottoman frontier, and the Saudi Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs (1) Fuad Bey Hamza, was informed during his visit to London in September 1934 that His Majesty's Government were prepared not to rest on the purely legal position, but to examine Ibn Saud's claims in a generous spirit, as part of a comprehensive settlement of all outstanding questions. It was not possible, however, to proceed further with the matter during these discussions, since Fuad Bey was unable to make any definite statement of Ibn Saud's desiderata. In the meantime His Majesty's Government continued to seek a possible basis for a settlement free from danger to their own interests or to those of their dependants in eastern Arabia, which might be proposed to the Saudi Arabian Government. E 5958/2427/25 (1934)

9. As a result of this further examination, instructions were sent to Sir A. Ryan, His Majesty's Minister at Jedda, early in 1935. Foreign Office telegram No. 8 of the 16th January 1935 to pursue the following four stages in negotiation with the Saudi Arabian Government:— E 518/518/25 (1935)

(i) To obtain a clear statement of Ibn Saud's territorial claims to the east and south-east of the Blue and Violet lines.

(ii) If these were not unreasonably vague or extensive, to offer, as part of a general settlement, to concede to Ibn Saud in full sovereignty a relatively small strip of territory immediately to the east of the Blue line. This strip would be bounded by a new line running from the head of the Dohat as Salwa to a point about five miles north-east of Sikak and from that point, in a direct line which would leave Banaiyan about five miles to the east, as far as the intersection of this line with parallel 20° North. The proposed boundary would run from this point of intersection in a south-westerly direction to a point, to be agreed later, on the Violet line. (The new line involved in this offer came to be called the "Green line.")

(iii) If this offer failed to satisfy Ibn Saud, to propose the creation of a neutral desert zone lying roughly between meridians 51° and 55° East, its northern and southern boundaries being drawn so as to leave a wide margin of territory to the hinterland to the sheikhdoms of Qatar and Abu Dhabi on the Trucial Coast, and the Aden Protectorate. This zone was to be subject for a fixed period of years to a special regime under which neither Ibn Saud nor any other ruler would exercise any rights of territorial sovereignty (such as granting concessions), but Ibn Saud would retain personal sovereignty over any of his tribes sojourning there.

(iv) In that last resort Ibn Saud might be granted the western part of the desert zone (*i.e.*, west of meridian 52° East) in full sovereignty.

(1) The Minister for Foreign Affairs was and still is the Amir Faisal, one of Ibn Saud's sons, but at that time his deputy did all the work.

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10. These instructions formed part of a plan for a comprehensive settlement of all outstanding Anglo-Saudi questions, but later this plan was found to be impracticable and was abandoned. In view of the importance of the frontier question, however, His Majesty's Government determined to pursue its settlement without reference to other problems in Anglo-Saudi relations.

11. The Saudi Arabian Government were therefore once more pressed, in the course of a private conversation between Fuad Bey and Sir A. Ryan on the 21st January, 1935, to produce a precise statement of Ibn Saud's desiderata. This request was subsequently renewed on the 1st March and a note containing the Saudi Arabian claims was eventually handed to Sir A. Ryan by Fuad Bey Hamza on the 3rd April. The statement, though not clear on all points, made extensive demands. In the north Ibn Saud claimed as the boundary with Qatar a line starting from a point on the west coast of Qatar about fifteen miles north of Qasr-es-Salwa and running thence for a distance of about five miles in an eastern direction between the Jebel Nakhsh and the Jebel Dukhan, leaving the former in Saudi Arabia and the latter to Qatar. From there the line proceeded south-east and south for a distance of about twelve miles and then continued due east to a point on the coast of the Persian Gulf about seven miles north of the Khor-el-Odeid, thus leaving the latter in Saudi Arabia. The proposed boundary started again from a point on the Persian Gulf sixteen miles south of the Khor-el-Odeid and after running to the south for a distance of about ten miles turned east-south-east and followed a line curving slightly to the south until it reached the intersection of meridian 56° East and parallel 22° North. From there it followed meridian 56° East to parallel 19° North and then ran in a straight line to the intersection of meridian 52° East and parallel 17° North, whence it continued along parallel 17° to the point of its intersection with the Violet line.

12. As the above demands (which were based on the areas frequented by certain tribes) seemed, extensive though they were, to be not unreasonable as an opening move in the negotiations, Sir A. Ryan proceeded forthwith to the second stage in the programme summarized in paragraph 9 above and offered the concession described in sub-paragraph (ii) thereof.

13. No further important negotiations occurred until the problem was discussed with Fuad Bey Hamza in London in June and July of the same year (1935). In the meanwhile, however, the whole question had been reconsidered by His Majesty's Government as a result of a report received from the Resident at Aden in which it was pointed out that the tribes of the eastern Aden Protectorate exercised exclusive rights up to a line running from the intersection of meridian 55° East and parallel 20° North as far as the Violet line at the point of its intersection with parallel 18° North and that no Saudi tribes exercised any rights to the south of that line. In view of this information it was agreed that the proposed desert zone was likely in the end to be too restricted an area to justify the complicated regime it would involve. Stages (iii) and (iv) in paragraph 9 above were accordingly abandoned and replaced in His Majesty's Government's programme by two further offers of territory in full sovereignty, viz.:—

(a) a line running to a point at least five miles south-west of Banaiyan along the line of the concession already offered (paragraph 9 (ii) above) and thence to the intersection of meridian 52° East and parallel 22° 30′ North, thence due south along meridian 52° East to the point of its intersection with parallel 19° North, and from there in a straight line to the intersection of parallel 18° North with the Violet line (the boundaries of this proposed zone came to be called the "Brown line"); and

(b) the addition to (a) of the area bounded by a line running from the intersection of parallel 22° 30′ North and meridian 52° East due east to meridian 53° East, thence due south to the intersection of meridian 53° East with the prolongation in a straight line of the southern boundary of the concession offered in (a).

The offer of (a) was to take place if and when Ibn Saud rejected the concession already offered (paragraph 9 (ii) above) as insufficient. (b) was only to be offered as a last resort and if there was hope of its producing a settlement. At the same time it was decided that His Majesty's Government would not be prepared to make any concession beyond meridian 53° East nor to allow Saudi Arabia access to the Persian Gulf on the eastern side of the Qatar peninsula.

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14. Ibn Saud's reply to the offer made to him in April (paragraph 9 (ii) above was communicated to His Majesty's Government during the discussions with Fuad Bey Hamza in London during June and July 1935, but he made it clear that Ibn Saud was not prepared to consider the offer as a basis for a settlement. Although Fuad Bey was thereupon informed that His Majesty's Government were prepared to make a further concession on the lines of (a) in paragraph 13 above, he could hold out no hope that Ibn Saud would agree to any modification of his claims set forth in the Saudi statement of the 3rd April, 1935. In defence of Ibn Saud's proposals Fuad Bey explained that they were based on areas where the inhabitants were subject to Saudi authority. In the north, in the neighbourhood of the Qatar peninsula, the political allegiance of actual settlements and recognized districts should be adopted as a guiding principle. In the desert area of the south, the proper method of delimiting the frontier would entail consideration of the most important factor in the desert, namely, the recognized grazing grounds or "diras" of the various nomadic tribes. He maintained that the statement of Ibn Saud's demands was formulated on the basis of the grazing grounds of four tribal groups which acknowledged Saudi sovereignty, in particular of the widespread Murra tribe, and in support of the line claimed by Ibn Saud he communicated the names of 161 wells alleged to be owned by that tribe. Fuad Bey criticised the concessions offered by His Majesty's Government on the ground that they were purely arbitrary and not in accordance with the material facts of the situation in the desert. The Saudi Arabian Government had, he said, worked out after the most careful investigation and enquiry a carefully plotted and rational boundary which took account of the political and tribal situation, and they were prepared to provide detailed evidence in support of their proposal. Hitherto His Majesty's Government had merely replied to all Saudi proposals by a simple counter offer of an arbitrarily limited and narrow area which failed to take account of the facts. In reply it was pointed out to Fuad Bey that there was a wide difference between the extreme limits of a tribe's wanderings (which would inevitably overlap with the limits of other tribes) and the actual territory within which a tribe was predominant. His Majesty's Government had always been ready to recognize that territory in which a certain tribe was unquestionably the predominant influence belonged to that tribe, but it nevertheless seemed obvious that there would have to be a compromise between the extreme limits of the various tribal "diras." Furthermore, the question of allegiance was not always one which could be settled decisively. According to the information in the possession of His Majesty's Government many of the tribes were of uncertain and changing allegiance. There were, of course, certain areas which were predominantly or exclusively frequented by certain tribes owing a definite and exclusive allegiance to a particular ruler. His Majesty's Government were prepared to take such considerations into full account in arriving at a settlement, and indeed had already done so in the formulation of their present proposals. But it seemed clear that a settlement could not be based on tribal considerations alone and that there existed other factors which should also be taken into account.

Eastern (Arabia) Print Section 5 of June 25, 1935

E. 4314/77/91 of July 9, 1935

15. The discussions with Fuad Bey were necessarily inconclusive and productive of scant tangible result beyond providing each side with a clearer knowledge of the basis of the other's claims. It soon became apparent that the greatest difficulties were presented by the northern sector of the frontier. Although Fuad Bey on one occasion indicated in reply to a question that Ibn Saud might perhaps be prepared to concede the Jebel Nakash if he was assured of obtaining the Khor-al-Odeid in return, he held out no real hope that the King would be willing to abandon his claim to either of these places, and it seemed likely that the resulting deadlock would render it impossible to reach a settlement of any other parts of the frontier. It was agreed, however, that both sides should consider the arguments advanced by the other with regard to the northern sector. As regards the southern sector it appeared from a statement made to Sir A. Ryan by Fuad Bey that Ibn Saud claimed, and based his territorial demands upon the allegiance of three tribes, the Murra, Beni Hajir and Duran [Dimnan]) and part of another (the Manasir) in the Rub al Khali. Before the discussions came to an end Fuad Bey communicated to the Foreign Office a memorandum stating the Saudi view of the position regarding the frontier, together with a statement on the "diras" or tribal areas of the three

E. 4131/77/91 1935

and a half tribes claimed by Ibn Saud with particular reference to the southern sector of the frontier. At the end of the discussions Fuad Bey was informed that Ibn Saud's claims would receive full and fair consideration in the light of these documents, and that the reply of His Majesty's Government to his two communications would be returned to the Saudi Arabian Government in due course through His Majesty's Legation at Jedda.

16. In the meantime an incident occurred which was to cause His Majesty's Government considerable trouble and to have repercussions during the next two years. Ibn Saud as the most powerful ruler in Arabia had long had pretensions to a vague suzerainty over the Sheikhs of the Trucial Coast springing partly from contempt for such insignificant rulers and partly from unwillingness to admit that Article 6 of the Anglo-Saudi Treaty of Jedda of the 20th May 1927 (Cmd. 2951) precluded him from having direct relations with these Sheikhs. Though various declarations were made to Fuad Bey of His Majesty's Government's interest in the preservation of the existing position on the Trucial Coast, the reluctance of the Saudi Arabian Government to abandon their attitude was the direct cause of the complications which occurred in the succeeding months.

17. After long preliminary negotiations during the spring of 1935, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf had on the 11th May addressed a note to the Sheikh of Qatar promising him British protection against attack on certain conditions, of which one was the grant to the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company of a concession which was then under negotiation. This note did not indicate within what area this protection would be afforded, but His Majesty's Government had laid down for the guidance of their own representatives that protection would be given to the top of the Dohat as Salwa to the coast immediately north of the Khor el-Odeid. The concession was granted on the 17th May 1935. It was accompanied by a map on which the southern boundaries of the concession area were shown by a line later known as the "concession line". This line started from the Dohat-as-Salwa about 8 miles north of Qasr as Salwa, ran southeastwards for about 12 miles, leaving the Jebel Nakhah in Qatar and from there eastwards to a point on the Persian Gulf about 8 miles north of the Khor el-Odeid. It has since been regarded as equivalent to the southern frontier of Qatar, although no attempt has been made to reach agreement about it with the Sheikh.

18. When news of the note reached Ibn Saud's ears six weeks later he wrote direct to the Sheikh of Qatar on the 6th August, 1935, remonstrating with him for having granted, or intending to grant, an oil concession without waiting for some settlement of the question of the south-eastern frontiers. In the next month Sheikh Yusuf Yasin mentioned the matter to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Jedda, and subsequently Mr. Calvert was instructed to make exception to Ibn Saud's action in addressing the Sheikh on a matter concerning foreign affairs, and to defend the grant of the concession on the ground that the area lay in territory in which no rights of the Saudi Arabian Government could be admitted, for reasons which had been explained to Fuad Bey in July. He was also instructed to inform the Saudi Arabian Government that His Majesty's Government had promised protection to the Sheikh against aggression in particular of the oil concession area. Article 6 of the Treaty of Jedda was also formally invoked. Mr. Calvert carried out his instructions in a letter addressed to Sheikh Yusuf Yasin on the 26th September 1935. The wording and interpretation of this letter (which was, however, based strictly on the instructions of the Foreign Office) were the cause of considerable embarrassment to His Majesty's Government in the course of 1938 (see paragraph 50 below).

19. The discussions which had taken place with the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs in the summer of 1935 paved the way for a re-examination of the whole question by His Majesty's Government in the light of the additional information supplied by Fuad Bey and in a spirit more favourable to Ibn Saud. Enquiries were made of the authorities in the Persian Gulf and the Aden Protectorate about the precise limits of the areas frequented by the tribes whose allegiance was claimed by Ibn Saud, and as a result it transpired that these areas were more extensive than had hitherto been supposed. It was consequently decided to make a further effort, which would involve going to the extreme limit of concession in order to reach agreement, and when Sir A. Ryan visited Ibn Saud at Riyadh in November 1935 he took with him entirely new instructions which enabled him to offer Ibn Saud a great part of what he had originally

demanded, subject to insistence on the attribution to Qatar of the whole of the mountains or hills (including the Jebel Nakhah) composing its physical structure and to a refusal to entertain the Saudi demand for a boundary extending to the Persian Gulf east of Qatar. Sir A. Ryan was instructed to emphasise to Ibn Saud that the present offer represented the utmost limits to which His Majesty's Government were prepared to go and that, indeed, they had only felt able to go thus far on account of their strong desire to reach a final settlement; and further that, while His Majesty's Government had in no way abandoned their objections to basing the frontier solely on tribal considerations and were still strongly of the opinion that historical, geographical and strategic considerations must also be taken into account, their present offer in fact covered practically the whole dira of the Murra tribe (the most important of the three and a half tribes claimed by Ibn Saud), whose allegiance to him His Majesty's Government were prepared in principle to recognise.

20. The boundary thus offered, which is known as the "Riyadh line", was defined as follows in a note handed to Fuad Bey at Riyadh on the 25th November, 1935, by Sir A. Ryan:

Enclosure 1 to R. 7474/77/91 (1935)

(a) A line starting from a point on the eastern shore of the Dohat-as-Salwa 4 miles to the north-east of the point where the sea is nearest to Qasr as Salwa and running in a straight line due south-eastwards for 10 miles (it was decided to indicate the terminal of this line as key-point A).

(b) Thence the boundary would proceed in as straight a line as possible to a point (key-point B) midway between Haluwain and Nakhala, but drawn so as to leave Aqalat-al-Manasir, Farhad, Rimth, Khafur and the route between Doha and Abu Dhabi, which passes west of the Sabkhat-al-Amra, to Abu Dhabi, and Haluwain, Bil Deirish and Raghuwan to Saudi Arabia.

(c) From this point (key-point B) the boundary was to proceed in a straight line to the intersection of parallel 23° north with meridian 52° east (key-point C); thence in a straight line to the intersection of parallel 22° 30' north and meridian 55° east (key-point F) and then along that meridian to its intersection with parallel 20° north (key-point G).

(d) From there the boundary ran in an approximately straight line, but so as to leave the Sabkhat Mijora in Saudi Arabia and the Ramlat Mugshin in Muscat and Oman, to the intersection of meridian 56° east and parallel 19° north (key-point H) and thence in a straight line to the intersection of parallel 18° north with the Violet line of the Anglo-Turkish Convention of 1914.

21. Sir A. Ryan, when making this offer, informed Fuad Bey that the sections between points G and H were under discussion with the Sultan of Muscat and subject to his confirmation. He did, however, hint guardedly to Fuad Bey that, subject to the Sultan's views, it might be possible for this section of the line to be drawn to include some territory lying to the east of meridian 55°, though not so far east as meridian 56°.

22. This new offer was rejected on the following day, the 26th November, mainly on account of the Saudi Arabian Government's reluctance to give up the Jebel Nakhah and Khor-el-Odeid. Fuad Bey, however, more than hinted that, if the Jebel Nakhah were conceded, Ibn Saud might be induced to abandon his claim to the coastal area which included the Khor-el-Odeid and reduce his demands in the south-east.

Enclosure 2, R. 7474/77/91 (1935)

23. It was now more than ever evident that the northern sector of the disputed area was the chief obstacle to a general settlement. The claims of Ibn Saud in this area extended to places the cession of which His Majesty's Government considered themselves for various reasons unable to contemplate. The Khor-el-Odeid, the first of these, a small inlet at the south-eastern end of the Qatar peninsula, had for long been recognised as the property of the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi, and the other, the Jebel Nakhah, a hill at the south-western end of the Qatar peninsula forming part of a larger range of low-lying hills called the Jebel Dukhan, belonged to the Sheikh of Qatar.

24. Ibn Saud's claim to the Khor-el-Odeid was based partly on the contention that in former times his ancestors exercised authority over this area, and

partly on local tribal allegiance, of which he claimed evidence was given by the periodical payment of tribute by the tribes. In addition, the Saudi Arabian Government maintained that possession of the Khor-el-Odeid was necessary to them in order to prevent smuggling from that area into Saudi Arabia and to provide them with a suitable site for a port on the Persian Gulf. The validity of the claim, both on historical and legal grounds, is extremely doubtful, and it is further questionable whether the Khor-el-Odeid possesses the value as a harbour which the Saudi Arabian Government have attributed to it in their imagination. Moreover, it seemed at the time to His Majesty's Government that any offer of the territory in this area would conflict with an engagement entered into in 1906 by His Majesty's Government with the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi to recognise the area fringing the Khor-el-Odeid as his territory and prevent its occupation by anyone else. It had also been suggested (though this view was not subsequently maintained) that it would be undesirable on strategic grounds to agree to a cession which would have the effect of establishing a wedge of territory belonging to the Saudi Arabian Government between Qatar and the other British-protected States on the Persian Gulf. Nevertheless, His Majesty's Government might have considered further the possibility of meeting Ibn Saud's claim to the Khor-el-Odeid if there had been any hope of the achievement thereby of a final settlement of the frontier question. But in view of Fuad Bey's remarks to His Majesty's Minister at Jedda it seemed unlikely that even an offer of the Khor-el-Odeid would be sufficient to induce Ibn Saud to abandon his claim to the Jebel Nakhsh.

25. The claim to the Jebel Nakhsh also is based on the argument that the local tribes owe allegiance to Ibn Saud, but it is probable that the real motive behind it is the desire to obtain an additional source of revenue—an object very real and urgent necessity for the Saudi Government since the Jebel Nakhsh is about the only part of Qatar which is believed to have potential value as an oil field. The legal justification for this claim does not appear to be any stronger than in the case of the Khor-el-Odeid, and topographically the Jebel Nakhsh would rightly belong to the Sheikh of Qatar. But the overriding importance to a cession of the Jebel Nakhsh to the Saudi Arabian Government which made it impossible for His Majesty's Government to contemplate was the circumstance that the Jebel Nakhsh was included in the concession which, with His Majesty's Government's full approval, had been granted in May 1935 to the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company by the Sheikh of Qatar (see paragraph 17 above), the approval of His Majesty's Government having been given at a time when they had not received from Sir A. Ryan (though they did so very shortly afterwards) Ibn Saud's proposal (see paragraph 11) showing that his claims extended as far as the Jebel Nakhsh.

26. In the early part of the year 1936 there was no further advance towards a settlement, and when Fuad Bey on the 3rd February made enquiries about the problem His Majesty's Minister discouraged him from hoping that His Majesty's Government could improve on the offer made at Riyadh (paragraph 20).

27. In the course of the conversations at Riyadh in 1935 Sir A. Ryan had restated the position of His Majesty's Government in regard to the foreign affairs of the Trucial Sheikhs and the objections to Ibn Saud's direct correspondence with the Sheikh of Qatar. Fuad Bey did not contest the arguments, but advanced a new suggestion that a direct agreement between the Sheikh and Ibn Saud prior to the Anglo-Qatar Treaty of 1916 was in existence and was therefore binding as the Sheikh must be held to have been a free agent before the date of the treaty.

28. This alleged agreement between the Sheikh of Qatar and Ibn Saud led to a discussion lasting for several months during 1936. The Sheikh, challenged by the Political Agent at Bahrein, denied the assertion of Fuad Bey that there had been correspondence between him and Ibn Jiluwi, the Governor of Hasa, in which he had recognised Ibn Saud's right to the Jebel Nakhsh. He could not even think of any correspondence into which such a meaning could be read, except that possibly, though about this he could not be certain, Ibn Saud or Ibn Jiluwi might have written to him for permission to collect "zakat" (tribute) from Saudi tribesmen grazing their flocks and herds near the Jebel Dukhan. Fuad Bey tried to extract from His Majesty's Minister an affirmative answer to the hypothetical question whether the Sheikh of Qatar was not a free agent for international purposes before 1916 and whether any agreement concluded between the Sheikh and Ibn Saud before that date was not in consequence binding upon

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His Majesty's Government. But this attempt was not successful. On instructions from His Majesty's Government Sir Andrew Ryan informed Fuad Bey that His Majesty's Government had been unable to trace any such agreement, told him of the Sheikh's denial and reiterated that in asking for further information His Majesty's Government did not necessarily admit that if the existence of such an agreement were established they could recognise it as a valid instrument. Fuad Bey's attitude on this occasion was evasive, and he did not refer to the matter again before he left for Europe about a month later. Sheikh Yusuf Yasin, Ibn Saud's private secretary (who acted for him in his absence), proved to be even more evasive, and eventually he informed Sir Andrew Ryan after, as he said, consultation with Ibn Saud, that they did not wish to touch on Sir Andrew's conversation with Fuad Bey about the agreement with Qatar. Sir Andrew Ryan, or any other British representative could, he implied, pursue the discussion on Fuad Bey's return. In fact, Ibn Saud threw Fuad Bey and the alleged agreement heavily overboard. To make the position quite clear Sir Andrew Ryan said that he could only draw one conclusion from Sheikh Yusuf Yasin's attitude, viz., that Ibn Saud had disavowed Fuad Bey and did not endorse his statement about the existence of the pre-1916 agreement.

29. At this interview Sheikh Yusuf Yasin said that Ibn Saud had not in the past recognised any specific limits to the territories of the Persian Gulf rulers, though he always treated them in a liberal spirit. When the Ikhwan movement was being organised he had directed the Ikhwan not to go into the Jebel Akhdar or the Araiq (see paragraphs 40-41 below) in order that they should not incommode the Sheikh of Qatar. The conversation turned to the letter which Ibn Saud had written to the Sheikh of Qatar about the oil concession, and Sheikh Yusuf Yasin's attitude compelled Sir Andrew Ryan to repeat the warning that if the threat contained in Ibn Saud's letter were carried out, His Majesty's Government would be bound to protect what they believed to be the territory of the Sheikh of Qatar. Sir Andrew Ryan also made His Majesty's Government's attitude on the question of direct correspondence quite clear. The Saudi Arabian Government might think, contrary to the British view, that they were free to address the Sheikh of Qatar direct, but if the Sheikh received any communication from the Saudi Government, he was not merely free, but under an obligation, to inform His Majesty's Government.

30. In October 1936 Petroleum Concessions, Limited, a subsidiary of the Iraq Petroleum Company, informed the Foreign Office that the Rub al Khali probably contained important oil resources, and that they would like to obtain from Ibn Saud a concession covering all the territory under his sovereignty east of meridian 48° 00', up to such a boundary as might eventually be agreed upon between him and His Majesty's Government. The Foreign Office pointed out that such an application might give Ibn Saud an exaggerated idea of the economic value of the area in dispute and make him even more intransigent in his dealings with His Majesty's Government, and expressed the wish that the company should not approach Ibn Saud until the frontier negotiations had made some progress and at any rate not for another six months.

31. The frontier question was taken up with Fuad Bey later in the year and, on his return from a visit to Ibn Saud, he expressed the following views to Sir Reader Bullard, who had by that time succeeded Sir A. Ryan. Any impression Sir A. Ryan might have had that the Saudi Arabian Government were prepared to compromise was due to misunderstanding of Fuad Bey's ideas, which were that he should try to find some new course to commend to their Governments. He had no counter proposals to make to the latest offer of His Majesty's Government, since the southern boundary proposed by the Saudi Arabian Government was based on the essential needs of the tribes in that area. The British suggestion that the line should run east of longitude 55° East might be moved eastwards was not of much interest to the Saudi Arabian Government, since the country in that region was desert. Fuad Bey appeared to be taking advantage of the change of Ministers when he suggested that His Majesty's Government attached the greatest importance to the Khor el Odeid but much less to the Jebel Naqlah, which the Saudi Arabian Government regarded as most important. Sir R. Bullard held out no hope of any concession beyond that already mentioned and could only promise to report to the Foreign Office.

32. Sir R. Bullard informed the Foreign Office that but for the complication introduced by the interests of Petroleum Concessions, Limited, in Qatar he

would have been in favour of leaving the question of the eastern and south eastern frontiers in abeyance, but that, as things were, he could only suggest—

(1) that Fuad Bey should be informed, in order that the Saudi Arabian Government might remain under no illusion on this point, that His Majesty's Government regarded both the Jebel Nakhab and the Khor-el-Odeid as essential, but should be asked on what other parts of the frontier he thought that he and His Majesty's Minister could produce joint proposals likely to appeal to their respective Governments,

(2) that meanwhile it should be considered whether His Majesty's Government could afford to offer further slight concessions on the borders of Muscat and the Aden Protectorate.

He added that he was well aware of the difficulties inherent in this second suggestion and that he doubted whether concessions in those areas would induce Ibn Saud to make a formal renunciation of the Jebel Nakhab, but that he saw no other alternative to the policy of doing nothing, which was ruled out by the aims of Petroleum Concessions Limited.

33. At the beginning of January 1937 Sir R. Bullard was instructed on the lines of his own suggestions, as summarised in the preceding paragraph, and acted accordingly. Fuad Bey later brought word in reply that Ibn Saud would not give way but was willing to leave the point in abeyance confident that nothing untoward would occur to mar Anglo-Saudi relations. After a preliminary talk about other parts of the frontier Sir R. Bullard deduced that it seemed likely that the Saudi Arabian Government would be prepared to effect a compromise over the frontier of the Aden Protectorate and that Fuad Bey appeared to know nothing whatever about the Muscat frontier.

34. With the consent of the Government of Aden, therefore, a copy of their tribal map was shown to Fuad Bey and it was pointed out to him that the point at which the line put forward by the Saudi Arabian Government would be nearest to the sea, viz., the junction of 52° East and 17° North, would fall within territory ethnographically belonging to the Aden Protectorate tribes. Fuad Bey, who had long been an exponent of the tribal basis of territorial claims, was unprepared with a reply to this argument, but made the personal suggestion that the point under discussion, which had been indicated to him as falling among the tribes of the Aden Protectorate, should be moved farther to the north in such a way, however, as still to leave Shisur and Tarbam in Saudi territory. To an enquiry whether these wells appeared on the map of Murra wells which he communicated to His Majesty's Government in 1935 (paragraph 14), he replied (though erroneously) in the affirmative and promised to ascertain on what basis the Saudi claim to these two wells and to two others called Sanam and Thamid rested. The result of his enquiries was, however, never given to His Majesty's Minister. After a study of the evidence in Mr. Bertram Thomas's *Arabia Felix* Sir R. Bullard wrote to Fuad Bey on the 12th February explaining that the evidence seemed to show:

(1) That all four wells were in the steppe country which slopes from the coastal mountains to the sand;

(2) That the tribes within that belt were all tribes to which Ibn Saud made no claim;

(3) That the Murra do not come as far south as these four wells.

35. So far as the Saudi Arabian Government were concerned the only other development in the south eastern frontier question during 1937 was provided by the discussions which took place in the course of the visit made by Mr. Rendel, the head of the Eastern Department of the Foreign Office, to Saudi Arabia during the early months of the year.

36. Mr. Rendel on his way to Jedda by way of Bahrein, visited the Qatar peninsula with the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf in a Royal Air Force aeroplane. He made a sketch map of the whole Jebel Dukhan of which the Jebel Nakhab was found to be clearly an integral part, and on his arrival at Jedda Sir R. Bullard and he, in the course of prolonged discussions, showed the map to Sheikh Yusif Yasin and Sheikh Hafiz Wahba, the Saudi Arabian Minister in London. Mr. Rendel described the terrain fully, but although he dwelt on the fact that the Jebel Nakhab formed an integral part of the Jebel Dukhan and the Jebel Dukhan of the Qatar peninsula, Sheikh Yusuf Yasin reiterated the old argument based on tribes, that all the tribes in that area owed their allegiance to Ibn Saud, who might, he added, have put forward far wider claims than he had

ment of Aden took by superior force, by armed aggression five years after the

actually done but that Ibn Saud if the Jebel Nakhah were given him would abandon the rest of his claim in that quarter. Mr Rendel said that the integrity of the peninsula must be maintained, and urged that, in view of the fact that the claim to the Jebel Nakhah had been put forward by the Saudi Arabian Government at an advanced stage and had come as a complete surprise to His Majesty's Government, it was not worth imperilling a settlement of the whole question on its account. When the discussion turned to the Khor-el-Odeid Mr Rendel stated that he had hoped something might be done to meet Ibn Saud's wishes, but that prolonged and careful study of the records showed that for over sixty years long before Ibn Saud had advanced his claim to the territory it had formally been recognised by His Majesty's Government as part of Abu Dhabi. A note embodying the most important extracts from documents connected with the history of the Abu Dhabi claim was handed to Sheikh Yusuf Yasin.

37. To the argument employed by the Saudi representatives, that the recognition of the special treaty relations of His Majesty's Government with the Trucial Sheikhs (see paragraph 17) did not imply the recognition of any particular frontiers, Mr Rendel replied that His Majesty's Government's recognition of a valid claim by any Sheikh to any particular place formed part of their treaty relations with that particular Sheikh, and must in its turn be regarded as covered by Ibn Saud's recognition of their special relations with these Sheikhs. Mr Rendel pointed out that the Khor-el-Odeid itself was without value for Ibn Saud, since it was useless as a harbour, while the land to the west of it afforded the only passage between Abu Dhabi and Qatar. In any case, it was impossible for His Majesty's Government to go back on their undertaking of 1906.

38. Finally, the conversation turned to a locality called the Safaq wells, which lie on the caravan route from the Trucial coast to Qatar and Hasa at about longitude 52° East, and Mr Rendel indicated that there was some hope that a concession might be made in that quarter. If, as he believed, the wells were much nearer the coast than appeared from the published maps, the Saudi frontier could be moved further towards the coast on condition that Safaq itself and the caravan route remained in Abu Dhabi. But he could not admit the Saudi argument that Safaq was a Murra well.

39. In point of fact a few days later information was received from the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf based on a reconnaissance made by the Royal Air Force that Safaq was as much as three times nearer the coast than appeared on even the latest maps.

40. Mr Rendel made a personal appeal to Ibn Saud for a settlement of the question at his third interview with him on the 21st March 1937, and urged that, as His Majesty's Government had made great concessions, Ibn Saud might make some concession in this quarter, to which Ibn Saud repeated the long standing argument that the whole of the coast had belonged to his ancestors and that the present rulers could not deny it. There was a limit beyond which he would not go. The boundary of Qatar was well known to be Arak, but unfortunately this place did not appear on the accessible maps. Sir R. Bullard interposed that he believed it to be south of the Jebel Nakhah, and that, if this were so, there would be no longer any difference of opinion. As regards the Khor-el-Odeid Ibn Saud advanced the argument that in claiming it for Saudi Arabia he had the interests of His Majesty's Government as much at heart as his own, since no one, he alleged, but himself could maintain order there and when crimes were committed it was to him that the injured parties applied for redress. R. 1961/92/91 (1937)

41. Immediately after this interview Sir R. Bullard wrote to Sheikh Yusuf Yasin stating that on a map in the possession of His Majesty's Legation at Jedda, Arak was situated between Qasr as Salwa and the Jebel Nakhah and enquiring whether Ibn Saud's demand did not on this basis leave the Jebel Nakhah to Qatar. Ibn Saud's reply as transmitted by Sheikh Yusuf Yasin was to the effect that he was not referring to the Arak of Nakhah but to the one "lying south of Dukhan," and that therefore the Jebel Nakhah lay within Saudi Arabia, and that anyhow his statement was incidental and did not concern the details of the case. At the same time Sheikh Yusuf Yasin sent a protest from Ibn Saud against the policy of encirclement which he claimed His Majesty's Government were pursuing against him (a reference to His Majesty's Government's policy towards the Arab Sheikhdoms in the Persian Gulf).

42. In reporting on these discussions, Sir R. Bullard urged that it was undesirable at that moment to endeavour to force a settlement. If at the time of Mr Rendel's visit it had been possible to arrange for a settlement of the R. 1708/188/91 (1937) R. 2194/188/91 (1937)

whole question it would have been most desirable but the frontier question was ev dently a cause of annoyance to Ibn Saud and n these circumstances and to account of the difference of opinion about the purely geographic a aspects of the Jebel Nakhsh area to press the British claim in that quarter would be to endange and to counteract the good effect of the Rendel conversations In view of His Majesty s Government s declarat ons on this subject Ibn Saud might wel fee that he could not hope to obtain either of the two areas which he coveted but the was not the same thing as signing them away As regards the dangers arising from an undetermined frontier His Majesty's Minister believed that in the event of war if Ibn Saud were hostile to His Majesty s Government a pure paper frontier would not deter him from aggressive act on while if he were either an ally or a neutral he would be unlikely to disturb the *status quo*

Sir R Bullard urged therefore that n order not to let the frontier claims go by default a special joint commission should be sent to examine the pure geographical features of the Jebel Nakhsh area At the same time he urged that His Majesty s Government should consider giving Ibn Saud a royalty on any oil which might be found in or near the Jebel Nakhsh, on the pretext that the oil-bearing strata must run partly under his territory (though a similar plan had been found impracticable when Iraq had endeavoured to buy off Turkish intransigence about Mosul, Finally, he pointed out the strain that would be placed on Ibn Saud if the search for oil and minerals in Saudi Arabia continued to be unsuccessful, while oil were found, as in the case of Bahrein, in the territory of some completely unimportant ruler like the Sheikh of Qatar

43 On the 7th May 1937 the Foreign Office replied that, while the undesirability of pressing Ibn Saud for a decision was appreciated an undetermined frontier must in their opinion, constitute a serious source of danger and uncertainty particularly since Petroleum Development Qatar, Limited a subsidiary of Petroleum Concessions Limited to whom the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company had transferred their Qatar rights on the 5th February 1937 were hoping to begin prospecting in the south western area of the Qatar peninsula If nothing were done to effect at least a crystallization of the frontier on lines which appeared reasonable to His Majesty s Government and therefore to fulfil their obligations to the Arab States on the Trucial Coast it was always possible that Ibn Saud would continue to pursue his former tactics and seek to extend his influence thereby rendering the possibility of effecting a territorial settlement increasingly remote particularly if Anglo-Saudi relations deteriorated as a result of the imminent publication of the Report of the Royal Commission on Palestine In the circumstances His Majesty s Minister was asked whether he advocated a unilateral declaration by His Majesty s Government to be treated if necessary as confidential defining the line which they regarded as the boundary It was suggested that this might be done in an amicably phrased note explaining his, though His Majesty s Government appreciated the reasons for Ibn Saud s unwillingness to commit himself at this juncture it was impossible for His Majesty s Government to allow the question to continue in its present indeterminate state It was intended that the note after defining the northern section of the frontier on the lines of the Riyadh proposals modified to take account of the newly defined position of Safaq should explain that His Majesty s Government did not intend to claim territory either for themselves or for the Arab Sheikhs in the Persian Gulf beyond that line they proposed to treat the territory on the Qatar and Abu Dhabi side of the line as either under the control of His Majesty s Government or the suzerainty of the Arab rulers concerned finally while His Majesty s Government desired to record their position in this question to avoid misunderstanding they would, in order to spare Ibn Saud any possible embarrassment refrain from pressing for publication

44. Sir R. Bullard's reply was that the possibility of an early commencement of oil prospecting might soon justify the proposed communication, but suggested that, in order to sugar the pill it was important first to return the most favourable reply possible to a recent request of Ibn Saud s for arms (reminding him of the arms supplied at a critical moment in 1929 and saying either that His Majesty s Government did not propose to press at present for payment for the arms supplied then or else better still that they proposed to overlook the question of eventual payment) and then to send a sympathetic note about Ibn Saud s complaints of His Majesty's Government s policy of encirclement," in which an offer should be made to show any Saudi representative who His Majesty might care to appoint that the Jebel Nakhsh formed part of the Jebel Dukhan.

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45. The subject was considered in London at the end of June 1937 and as a result His Majesty's Minister was informed that it was not proposed to pursue the suggestion of a unilateral declaration by His Majesty's Government at least until the oil companies had decided to start prospecting and exploitation in the disputed areas. The Foreign Office was, however, inclined to favour Sir R. Bullard's suggestion of a communication to Ibn Saud on the subject of a survey of the disputed area, which might take the form of a rough topographical enquiry into the geographical features of the area followed by the submission of a report, though it was envisaged that it would be necessary to insist on the inclusion of a representative of the Sheikh of Qatar in the survey party. Sir R. Bullard was authorised to speak to Ibn Saud, or else to postpone the question till later when it might be possible to put forward more detailed proposals. In virtue of these discretionary powers Sir R. Bullard, who was about to depart for Riyadh when the telegram arrived, decided to leave the matter until later, partly because all that he and, as it happened, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf had had in mind was quite a short visit to the area in question in order that the Saudi representative might, with the evidence of his own eyes, see that the British contentions were correct and that the Jebel Nakhab did in fact form part of the Jebel Dhofar.

46. Meanwhile the Government of Aden were asked by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to consider whether some additional concession might not be made in the area between parallels 17° and 18°, particularly to the west of meridian 51. The Secretary of State considered it necessary to examine the question from the point of view of the interests of the area over which Aden Protectorate had indisputable claims, rather than with the intention of excluding Ibn Saud from those districts of which the ownership was completely indeterminate. The Aden Government, although they expressed the hope that a small concession would be made, considered that the utmost concession which could be considered politically wise would be the cession to Saudi Arabia of an additional strip of territory by renewing the frontier from the intersection of the Violet line with meridian 48° to a point on meridian 54° 30' minus south of parallel 19°. This proposal received the concurrence of the Colonial Office but His Majesty's Minister was of the opinion that a strip of cession 20 miles wide by 300 long would not possess much value as a counter to the game which Ibn Saud apparently attached so great importance to that part of the frontier at that moment. Sir R. Bullard further believed that, in view of the opinion expressed by the Governor of Aden, His Majesty's Government should try to avoid making the suggested cession, although if a unilateral declaration were to be made with regard to the frontier of Qatar he thought they should be prepared to leave to Ibn Saud the whole of the strip in question. On the 1st July the Foreign Office telegraphed to Jedda that the view of His Majesty's Government was that the balance of advantage lay in leaving the question of the southern section in abeyance for the present time. In conveying this decision to the Governor of Aden, the Colonial Office pointed out that the present policy of establishing British authority more firmly in the interior of the Protectorate would, by facilitating the acquisition of more detailed knowledge on the region, strengthen His Majesty's Government's position for a subsequent statement of their claim to that area.

47. The Saudi Arabian Muscat frontier, though it also was reviewed during the year 1937, was not discussed in Jeddah but formed the subject of considerable correspondence between the Political Agent at Muscat and the Sultan. The Sultan showed himself reluctant to define the western limits of his territory. It had never been done before. The possibility that there had been talk of concessions had, it was believed, made the Sultan even more suspicious than would have been expected. However, in a letter addressed to the Political Agent on the 11th May 1937 the Sultan finally stated that he would raise no objection if the eastern limits of the territory belonging to Ibn Saud were defined by a line based on the following points (see those selected for the definition of the "Riyadh" line, paragraph 20 above):

B. 3845, 259
9, 237

C. The intersection of 52° E. and 23° N.
D. The intersection of 54° 40' E. and 22° 40' N.
F. The intersection of 55° 40' E. and 22° N.
G. The intersection of 55° E. and 20° N.
H. The intersection of 52° E. and 19° N.

E 3845/258/91 (1937)

48. In August 1937 the Foreign Office wrote to the India Office suggesting that it might be advisable for a communication to be addressed to the Sultan mentioning *inter alia* that His Majesty's Government had taken note of the fact that while he was not able to state precisely the limits of his claims, he at any rate laid no claim to any territory beyond the points D, E, G and H as defined in the preceding paragraph, since this would serve to narrow down any controversy which might possibly arise if the present oil concession recently granted to Petroleum Concessions Limited came to be exploited and might help His Majesty's Government in securing an eventual definition of the inland boundary of the Sultanate.

49. In September 1937 the Political Agent at Bahrein expressed apprehension about efforts by Ibn Saud to establish his authority at Baraimi, an oasis lying at the foot of the northern end of the western slope of the Western Hajar range. Apparently Ibn Saud has long had some shadowy claim to Baraimi, but it lies so far outside the extreme limit of the eastern frontier which he has claimed in the course of the negotiations during the last few years that it would be difficult for him to put forward a territorial claim to the oasis now. On the other hand Baraimi seemed to be in the most promising area for oil in any territory adjacent to the Trucial Coast, and if oil were actually to be discovered in the oasis and boring to begin there would be strong temptation for Ibn Saud to put forward some kind of claim based on some shadowy show of right, such as his visits which are reported occasionally by his officials to gather tribute. He would be helped in this by the fact that the authority of other rulers over the tribes of the oasis (both the Sultan of Muscat and the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi have claims in this respect) seem to be of an uncertain kind.

E 3801/258/91 (1937)

50. The question of the Jebel Nakash, which had lapsed for several months, revived when news was received in the autumn that the California Arabian Standard Oil Company, who held the concession on the Saudi side of the frontier, were showing activity in the neighbourhood of Qasr al Sawa, and the moment for making a decision seemed to have arrived. On the 29th November 1937 further instructions were sent to Jedda which formed the basis of a note delivered by His Majesty's Legation to the Saudi Arabian Minister for Foreign Affairs. The most important passage of this note was as follows:—

> 'I have the honour to inform Your Royal Highness that according to recent reports which have reached His Majesty's Government it appears that the Standard Oil Company of California are prospecting in the neighbourhood of Qasr al Sawa. The views of His Majesty's Government with regard to the frontier in the said area have already been communicated to His Majesty King Abdul Aziz and His Majesty's Government are prepared to reopen negotiations for a settlement on the lines they have indicated. They assume that in the meantime no attempt will be made by the California Arabian Company to pass the line defined in the latest proposal by His Majesty's Government to His Majesty King Abdul Aziz so long as no final agreement has been reached as to that line. Since, however, there is some uncertainty as to the precise position of certain physical features concerned His Majesty's Government propose that a joint Anglo-Saudi topographical mission should be appointed to establish on the spot the exact nature and position of these features.'

To avoid all misunderstanding the British definition of the frontier made by Sir Andrew Ryan at Riyadh was repeated with the necessary modification in regard to the position of Safaq. As soon as the note had been handed to the Saudi Arabian Government Sir R. Bullard informed the Foreign Office by telegram in order that they might explain the position informally to the London representative of the Californian Arabian Standard Oil Company, while he himself made a similar communication to the Jedda representative of the company.

51. Subsequently both Fuad Bey and Sheikh Yusuf Yasin gave Sir R. Bullard highly coloured accounts of Ibn Saud's displeasure at the receipt of this note, which he thought typical, they said, of His Majesty's Government's disposition to give assurances of friendship but never to make any concession on any material issue. Sheikh Yusuf even reported that Ibn Saud was asking whether the British intended to treat him as the Italians were treating Spain or the Japanese China. It had not been expected that the note would be well received but since the decision had been taken and could not be reversed, nothing remained except to produce evidence to show that His Majesty's Government

had in fact been helpful over many matters and to resuscitate once more all the former arguments about Jebel Nakhsh. After a good deal of talk Fuad Bey said that the Saudi Arabian Government had informed the Californian Arabian Standard Oil Company of the divergencies of opinion between the Saudi Arabian Government and His Majesty's Government on the matter of the frontier, and added that there was therefore no cause for fear that the company would take action in territory which was under dispute. But he did accuse His Majesty's Government of allowing oil prospecting to be undertaken from the other side of the frontier, on the strength of a sign-post erected at Safaq wells in order to demarcate their exact position. When Sir R. Bullard reported this assurance he added that he hoped it would for the present be possible to postpone prospecting in that area, and stated that the Saudi Arabian Government favoured an agreement according to places and principles with which they were themselves acquainted rather than one dependent on an examination of purely geographical features. He had explained in reply that it was precisely the Saudi misapprehension on the matter of the purely geographical features of the Jebel Nakhsh area which was the cause of the present deadlock. But all discussion was vain and on the 30th December 1937 he reported that the Saudi attitude on the question might be defined as follows:— E 7656/256 9/1937

(1) That until a final settlement was reached over the disputed area no oil company representatives from the Saudi side of the frontier would enter the area, provided that a similar assurance was given by the oil company which was operating in the Arab States on the Persian Gulf.

(2) That the Saudi Arabian Government had always been ready to conclude an agreement, and that the obstacle had been the unwillingness of His Majesty's Government to recognise officially what territory was in reality in the possession and under the influence of Ibn Saud, they therefore enquired whether—

(3) His Majesty's Government did not agree that it was preferable to define the frontier in principle first "by specifying either places or co-ordinates."

52. In his report on the Saudi Arabian attitude Sir R. Bullard stated that Ibn Saud clung as tenaciously as ever to the Jebel Nakhsh and Khor el Odeid as well as to Safaq, actuated as he was by considerations of prestige, poverty and the possibility of oil. He added that reports from the Persian Gulf Residency on the Legation file showed that, in point of fact, it was Ibn Saud who administered at least the first two of the places in dispute. Nevertheless he was well aware that the history of the case went very much further back than the time of Ibn Saud, and that settlement on a purely tribal basis was out of the question. He did however want to avoid forcing an issue to the question at a time when European affairs loomed so large in international relations and he thought it would be worth while to await some indication of the international situation before undertaking further oil prospecting in neutral areas. E 7656/256 9/1937

53. Meanwhile on the 22nd December 1937 His Majesty's Government had decided that various proposals should be considered "for securing the good will of Ibn Saud in order to counteract as far as possible, the inevitable ill effects on the Arab world of His Majesty's Government's policy in Palestine. In this connexion the suggestion was advanced that Ibn Saud might be given the Jebel Nakhsh and an outlet on the Khor el Odeid and that compensation should be paid to the Arab rulers at whose expense these concessions would be made.

54. As a result of this decision and in an endeavour to meet the Saudi point of view as stated in (1) of paragraph 51 it was decided to ascertain whether the Petroleum Concessions Limited would in fact be willing to help His Majesty's Government in this matter. Early in January 1938 a memorandum giving a historical survey of the position and an explanation of the motives which led His Majesty's Government to grant full approval to the Anglo Iranian Oil Company concession secured in May 1935 from the Sheikh of Qatar was communicated privately and confidentially to Lord Cadman. It was explained that at that time nothing was known of Ibn Saud's claims and the possibility that he would ever seriously lay claim to territory as far east of the Blue line as the Jebel Nakhsh seemed so remote as to be almost negligible. The concession was therefore approved by His Majesty's Government without misgiving. Its terms were never communicated to the Saudi Arabian Government, although they protested against its conclusion at the time, and from later indications it E 410/10 9/1938

appeared that they may have been under the impression that it did not include the Jebel Nakhah—a misunderstanding which may have arisen as the result of a letter addressed to Sheikh Yusuf Yasin by His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Jedda in September 1935, which stated that "the concession does not extend to any territory under discussion with the Saudi Government" (see paragraphs 8 above and 59 below). It was further pointed out in the note that the political desirability of reaching a final settlement of the frontier question with Ibn Saud had of late become so increasingly apparent that it was necessary to consider the possibility of effecting a solution by the offer of some concession in regard to the Khor-el Odeid or the Jebel Nakhah. It seemed by no means certain that an offer of the Khor-el-Odeid would be sufficient to induce Ibn Saud to accept His Majesty's Government's previous proposals regarding the frontier, but there were indications that concession over the Jebel Nakhah might well reconcile him to the renunciation of his other claims. It was, therefore, suggested that, if the Petroleum Concessions, Limited, were willing to conclude an arrangement with the Californian Arabian Standard Oil Company whereby both companies would agree to exploit the Jebel Nakhah area jointly and to share any profits that might be derived therefrom, the chief obstacle to an agreement with Ibn Saud would be overcome and the possibility of reaching a final solution of the frontier question would be considerably nearer.

55. Lord Cranborne made it clear in his reply that he was strongly opposed to any concession on this point and, as a result, it was decided to abandon the question of any concession in the Jebel Nakhah, and to concentrate attention on the possibility of making some concession over the Khor el Odeid.

56. As a result of this fresh consideration of the question of some cession in the Khor el Odeid to Ibn Saud was renewed. According to views expressed on behalf of the Service Departments at this time, there was no objection on grounds of strategy to the cession of the Khor el Odeid to Ibn Saud, or alternatively in the view that it was strategically important to have an unbroken line of British controlled States along the Persian Gulf. Finally, it was decided early in 1938 to ascertain the views of His Majesty's Minister at Jedda, the Government of India, and the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf on the proposal to cede the area adjoining the Khor el Odeid.

57. Meanwhile, the controversy in its local aspect, which was already acute enough at the end of 1937, was further envenomed in 1938 as the result of two unfortunate incidents, an indiscretion on the part of the Jedda representative of the Californian Arabian Standard Oil Company, as a consequence of which Ibn Saud learned that His Majesty's Government had been in direct communication with the company about the frontier question, and the discovery that Ibn Saud had misread, or at any rate misinterpreted, the letter sent to Fuad Bey Hamza by Mr Cheverton in September 1935 (see paragraph 18).

58. As stated in paragraph 50, the Jedda representative of the Californian Arabian Standard Oil Company, Mr Lenahan, had been informed of the proposal to appoint a joint Anglo-Saudi frontier commission by His Majesty's Minister, and warned of the line beyond which His Majesty's Government considered no company holding a Saudi concession had a right to go. In a subsequent conversation with Fuad Bey, Mr Lenahan most indiscreetly alluded to this information, whereupon the Saudi Arabian Government on the 10th January made a protest to His Majesty's Legation against communications passing between His Majesty's Minister or the Foreign Office and local representatives of the Californian Arabian Standard Oil Company in a manner which they pointed out, might be interpreted as implying the existence of doubts and suspicions about the attitude of Ibn Saud. The oil companies, their note added, were in accordance with instructions which were issued to them by the Governments in control of the territories in which they worked, and the questions of the frontiers of these territories could only be discussed between Governments and not between private companies. Fuad Bey supplemented this note by informing Sir R. Bullard that the communication to Mr Lenahan had been taken as a personal affront by Ibn Saud, as implying that he might endeavour to do something underhand which it required pressure on the company from His Majesty's Government to prevent. This last misconception Sir R. Bullard was able to remove with obvious arguments.

59. The second incident was of a more serious character. In January 1938, Fuad Bey, during a conversation with His Majesty's Minister, referred to the

might be taken by superior force, by armed aggression five years after the

letter which Mr Calvert had written to him on the 26th September, 1935 (see paragraph 18 above), in which the fourth paragraph read as follows:—

> The southern limit of the oil concession granted to the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company by the Sheikh of Qatar does not extend beyond this Green line, but lies a considerable distance to the north of it. The concession does not therefore, extend to any territory under discussion with the Saudi Government."

Fuad Bey asked whether it could be said that the territory now in dispute in 1938 was not in dispute at the time when this letter was written in 1935, and whether the Saudi Arabian Government were not justified in taking this paragraph as an assurance that the concession area did not extend to the Jebel Nakab.

60. Subsequently, it became evident that the Saudi Arabian Government had attributed to the second sentence the meaning that no territory claimed by the Saudi Arabian Government could have been included in the Qatar concession, whereas the words "territory under discussion" were intended by His Majesty's Government to be read in the light of their repeated assurances that they were not prepared to discuss any further abatement of their claims beyond the Green line. At the time it seemed possible that Fuad Bey had unearthed this matter in order further to delay and confuse the question, but this theory was discounted by his obvious consternation when His Majesty's Minister explained to him the real significance of the sentence in Mr Calvert's letter. It is true that the letter, which was copied word for word from the instructions sent from the Foreign Office, might have been less ambiguous, and it is unfortunate that it reached the Saudi Arabian Government when Fuad Bey was not in charge of the Ministry. But in spite of the explanations, the harm was done: it appears that Ibn Saud was annoyed and that some suspicion of British good faith subsequently remained for a considerable time in his mind.

61. It was stated at the end of paragraph 59 that Sir R. Bullard had advocated an agreement for the postponement of any oil prospecting in the disputed areas pending an amelioration of the international situation, but that the Foreign Office were unable to approve his proposal on the ground that to accept the Saudi suggestion would be virtually to concede the Saudi case. It was therefore necessary for Sir R. Bullard in replying to the Saudi Arabian Government in January 1938 to refer to the merely oral statement made by Fuad Bey that there was no cause to fear that the company would prospect in the areas under dispute, and to ignore the Saudi note proposing mutual abstention from operations in that quarter. The Saudi Arabian Government refused to go beyond their written proposals, and although they failed to elicit any satisfactory reply from His Majesty's Government, the Californian Arabian Standard Oil Company did not, in fact, take any action thereafter, as far as was known to His Majesty's Government, in the area under dispute.

62. It was therefore, with the intention of preventing a fruitless exchange of *ex parte* arguments, and in view of the proposed modification of policy with regard to the Khor el Odeid, that early in March 1938 Sir R. Bullard appealed to Fuad Bey, who was about to go on leave, to make some attempt to get out of the impasse, and suggested that Fuad Bey should give his personal opinion as to the nature of the solution which he thought might conceivably prove acceptable to the Saudi Arabian Government, promising that he himself would ponder the matter and give his personal views on the possibility of its acceptance by His Majesty's Government. In this way neither government would be irrevocably committed, and a solution might be found. Fuad Bey, after a delay of several days, ostensibly for reflection, during which he had doubtless ascertained Ibn Saud's reactions to the proposal, advanced a suggestion in which he first all but insisted on the retention of the Jebel Nakhsh, but finally proposed, as a plan which might have some hope of acceptance by Ibn Saud, that His Majesty's Government should offer to abandon to Ibn Saud whichever of the two areas, the Jebel Nakhsh and Khor el Odeid, they considered the less important, and that the line demarcating the frontier should pass through the Safaq wells in such a way as to make them free of access to the population on both sides of the frontier.

63. These proposals not only provided a satisfactory answer to Sir R. Bullard's enquiry, but seemed to be compatible with the proposed

modification of policy with regard to Khor-el-Odeid. Sir R. Bullard however gave Fuad Bey no hint that he thought a compromise on these lines possible. He said that any reply he gave would be purely personal and that he proposed sending his observations not to Fuad Bey's temporary successor at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs but to Fuad Bey himself while he was on leave in Syria. In his report to the Foreign Office Sir R. Bullard said that he was of opinion that a compromise on these lines was possible and that it offered the possibility of removing the sole major obstacle in Anglo-Saudi relations other than Palestine.

64. In April 1938 a written reply to the protest of the 20th January about communications between His Majesty's Minister and local representatives was communicated to the Saudi Arabian Government stating that in 1934 when the California Arabian Standard Oil Company were beginning their operations in Hasa, the United States Government had asked His Majesty's Government for information about boundaries in those regions, and that His Majesty's Government had not only furnished the information but explained carefully and confidentially that the legal frontier in that area was the Blue line. The Saudi Arabian Government were duly informed at the time of this communication to the United States Government and since that time His Majesty's Government had not informed either the Saudi Arabian Government or the United States Government that they no longer consider the Blue Line as the legal frontier or that they considered that the company was free to prospect to the east of that Line. His Majesty's Government felt that they would have been justified in making a protest to the Saudi Arabian Government when they learned that the company, in spite of the information conveyed to this Government were operating near Qasr al Salwa, but on the contrary purely out of deference to Ibn Saud and from their desire to facilitate matters for him and for the company they had merely informed the company's representatives quite informally that they would raise no objection to the company's operating within certain limits to the east of the extreme limit yet proposed by His Majesty's Government to the Saudi Government, and this notwithstanding the previous communication made to the United States Government and to the Saudi Arabian Government. His Majesty's Government had acted in accordance with this practice in cases where important oil companies, whether of the same or of different nationalities were operating in adjoining areas, and they regretted that the Saudi Arabian Government should take exception to a normal procedure designed to ensure the maintenance of good relations between the great oil companies and the countries in which they were registered.

65. In November 1938 when His Majesty's Minister was at Riyadh, Fuad Bey interrogated him about the frontier question, and, emphasising the importance that attached to the question in Ibn Saud's eyes, asked whether Sir R. Bullard was able to make some reply to the proposals which he had put forward in the spring. But as His Majesty's Government had not been able to reach any agreement about the proposed cession of the Khor-el-Odeid owing to the existing rights of the Sheikh of Abu-Dhabi, which it was suggested could not be disregarded even if the sheikh were offered compensation in other directions, Sir R. Bullard was not, in the circumstances, able to give an encouraging reply to this question.

66. Since Fuad Bey's conversation with Sir R. Bullard in November 1938 the Saudi Arabian Government have not raised the question again, and it may apparently be considered to be in abeyance. No mention of it was made in the Saudi letter to the Prime Minister which the Emir Feisal brought with him when he came to London for the Palestine Conferences early in 1939, nor did the Emir himself mention the differences of opinion between His Majesty's Government and the Saudi Arabian Government on this question in the course of interviews with the Secretary of State and Sir L. Oliphant. Activity during this year was confined to an inconclusive exchange of views between the Foreign Office and the India Office in continuation of the attempt to discover some agreed basis for the final settlement of the question of the south-eastern frontier. During the first six months of 1940 there were no developments at all.

Eastern Department, June 30, 1940.

[E 2203/2203/25] No. 81

IBN SAUD'S CLAIMS IN RESPECT OF THE SOUTH-EASTERN FRONTIERS OF SAUDI ARABIA.

(The dispute between His Majesty's Government and the Saudi Arabian Government about these frontiers is described in a separate memorandum with maps entitled: "The South-Eastern Frontiers of Saudi Arabia" F. 2203/2203/25. June 30, 1940. Confidential, No. 15096.)

(A)—*The General Position.*

The frontier dividing Saudi Arabia from territory to the south and east is governed historically and actually in the view of His Majesty's Government by the provisions of the Anglo-Turkish Conventions of the 29th July 1913 and the 9th March 1914, by the Anglo-Saudi Treaty of Jeddah of the 20th May 1927, and by various agreements concluded between His Majesty's Government and the Arab States of the Persian Gulf and the Aden Protectorate.

2. The Anglo-Turkish Convention of the 29th July 1913 was never ratified, but that of the 9th March, 1914, was ratified and entered into force with the exchange of ratifications on the 3rd June 1914. These conventions laid down two lines, known as the Blue and Violet lines, as the southern and eastern boundaries of Ottoman territory in Arabia. The 1913 Convention defined the Blue line only, but the 1914 Convention defined both.

3. The Blue line starts on the Persian Gulf from a point opposite Zakhanniyah Island, which lies to the south of the Bahrein archipelago, and runs due south to the 20th parallel of latitude in the middle of the Rub-al-Khali. The Violet line starts from a place called Lakmat-ash-Sh'ab, about 75 miles north of Aden (and the termination point of the frontier between the Aden Protectorate and the Yemen as laid down in the years 1903 to 1905), and runs north-eastwards "at an angle of 45°" to the point of intersection of the Blue line and the 20th parallel.

4. The position arising under the Convention of 1914 is examined in a minute of the 29th August, 1934, by the Second Legal Adviser to the Foreign Office, Mr. Beckett (see Appendix). The conclusions of this minute may be summarised as follows:— E 5064/5499/25 (1934)

(i) The 1913 and 1914 Conventions established that Ottoman suzerainty did not extend east of the Blue line.

(ii) Ibn Saud could not claim territory east of that line in his capacity as Turkey's successor, or by reason of facts prior to the date of signature of the conventions.

(iii) On the other hand, the territory immediately east of the Blue line is not the territory of any other State,(¹) and the fact that the Porte acknowledged it as a British sphere of influence would not prevent it from being *res nullius*, and therefore open to acquisition by Ibn Saud or anyone else by occupation after 1914. Ibn Saud would not, moreover, succeed to the obligation, if any, of the Ottoman Empire to respect the British sphere of influence.

(iv) Ibn Saud might have acquired some of this territory already by occupation (*i.e.*, by establishing his sovereignty there), and might legitimately acquire more of the territory if it is not occupied by or under the effective authority of, any other State, by the same means. His Majesty's Government can only prevent him from so doing by concluding an agreement with him, or by occupying the territory themselves.

5. The policy of His Majesty's Government in this question has since been that, while willing to shape their policy in the light of the legal position

(¹) As a matter of fact the Conventions of July 29, 1913, and March 9, 1914, although neither states to whom other territory east and south of the Blue and Violet lines belonged, do state that the Blue line separated the Ottoman Sanjak of Najd from the territory of Qatar (El Katr).

discussed in Mr Beckett's minute and to negotiate a settlement which would have the effect of shifting the frontier considerably to the east and south of the Blue and Violet lines it is necessary as a matter of tactics not to cease when necessary to assert in public or in a negotiation that pending such a settlement the Blue and Violet lines form the legal frontier

6 On a strict view of the legal position it follows from what has been said in paragraph 4 that any territories to the east of the Blue line to which none of the local Arab rulers have an effective title may properly be acquired by Ibn Saud On the other hand, where a local sheikh can put forward a reasonable claim to a piece of territory such territory may be deemed to be legally his since in virtue of the 1914 Convention Ibn Saud cannot base any claims to territory beyond the Blue line on the state of affairs existing before 1914 He can only base them on actual possession acquired and exercised since that date

7 The position of the local sheikhs as thus stated is further reinforced by article 6 of the Treaty of Jedda of 1927 (see Command Paper 2951), whereby Ibn Saud undertook

> To maintain friendly and peaceful relations with Koweit and Bahrein and with the Sheikhs of Qatar and the Oman coast [*i.e.*, the Trucial Sheikhs who are in special treaty relations with His Britannic Majesty's Government]

8 It is the view of His Majesty's Government that by recognising their special treaty relations with the local Arab States Ibn Saud committed himself to the acceptance of the existing boundaries of those States But here a new difficulty arises owing to the fact that in most cases these boundaries have never been clearly defined The question is whether the sheikhs are equally entitled to those territories which, though never clearly defined, have been commonly regarded in the past as falling within their dominions, even when they have in fact had no proper claim to those territories and have never exercised any effective authority over them If the tribes which inhabit those territories now recognise the authority of Ibn Saud the further question arises whether the Saudi Arabian Government are precluded from putting forward a claim by article 6 of the Treaty of Jedda It is difficult to show that they are so precluded

9 The Saudi Arabian Government do not, it must be said, accept even the moderate view of the legal position described in paragraph 4. In the first place they deny that they are bound by the 1914 Convention at all. They maintain that this convention was concluded without the knowledge or consent of Ibn Saud, who had by the time the two conventions were signed succeeded in expelling all traces of Ottoman control or influence from the territories adjoining the Blue and Violet lines on the west and north with a Power which His Majesty's Government themselves recognised during the Great War to be a usurper and an oppressor of the Arab race Since however, Ibn Saud himself later in 1914 concluded a treaty formally recognising his dependence on the Ottoman Government the Saudi contention would seem to have little real justification and there can be little doubt that the 1914 Convention is, in fact, legally binding on Ibn Saud in his capacity of successor to the Ottoman Government (see paragraph 4 (i) and (ii) above)

10 Secondly the Saudi Arabian Government contend that article 6 of the Treaty of Jedda did not commit them to recognise any given frontiers claimed by the Arab sheikhs *a fortiori* in cases where those frontiers had never been clearly defined This argument has considerably more force than the one mentioned above since a modification of the frontiers of Qatar and the Trucial Sheikhdoms need not affect the special relations of His Majesty's Government with those States But at least it appears justifiable to maintain that article 6 of the Treaty of Jedda committed the Saudi Arabian Government to recognising the sovereignty of the Arab rulers over territories which had previously formed the subject of special agreements with His Majesty's Government and had been recognised by the latter on or before 1927 as falling within the dominions of those rulers As will be seen later this point is particularly relevant in the case of the Saudi claim to the territory adjoining the Khor el Odeid In other cases the varying interpretations given to article 6 of the Treaty of Jedda by His Majesty's Government and the Saudi Arabian Government are of little

practical importance, since in general it appears reasonable to hold that the legal position is as described in paragraph 6 above, and that the criteria mentioned therein may properly be applied in determining whether the Saudi Arabian Government are entitled to put forward a particular claim or not.

11. Assuming, then, that only such Saudi claims as fulfil the conditions already stated are admissible, it seems appropriate to consider briefly the specific grounds on which the Saudi claims are based. These fall roughly under two heads, viz. 'ancestral' claims and 'tribal' claims. Of the former, all that need be said here is that they have never been properly substantiated and that in any case the evidence available tends to show that they have no legal foundation. This question was effectively dealt with by Sir T. Fowle, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, in his despatch No. 594-S of the 28th June 1934 to the India Office, which shows that Ibn Saud has no valid "ancestral" claims to any part of Qatar and the Trucial Coast, although the important oasis of Buraimi, on the hinterland of the Trucial Coast, is a doubtful point. As Sir T. Fowle then pointed out, the complexities of Arabian history and of tribal movements make it impossible to refute in detail every vague ancestral claim which may be put forward by the Saudi Arabian Government, but it seems to be satisfactorily established that no such claim deserves serious consideration. E 4734/279/91 (1934)

12. The tribal claims, however, need to be examined more closely, since they are really the basis of the whole Saudi case. Briefly, the view put forward by the Saudi Arabian Government is that since much of the territory adjoining the Persian Gulf to the east of the Blue Line is under no regular rule, the status of any part of that territory must be determined solely on the basis of tribal allegiances. This view has not been accepted unreservedly by His Majesty's Government, who have pointed out on more than one occasion (e.g. at the meeting with Fuad Bey Hamza on the 24th June, 1935, see Eastern (Arabia) Print of the 25th June 1935, Section 3) that, since many Arabian tribes are accustomed to wander over a very wide area, it would be impossible to base territorial claims on the extent of those wanderings, or to establish a frontier line solely in accordance with fluctuating tribal allegiances, and further that a simple allocation of tribal areas could not, as the Saudi Arabian Government are sometimes inclined to maintain, replace a territorial frontier. Subject to these reservations, however, it follows from what has already been said earlier in this memorandum that it is justifiable for the Saudi Arabian Government to contend that where a given area is inhabited by tribes the majority of which acknowledge their allegiance to Ibn Saud, and no other ruler has any effective claim to that territory, it may rightfully be claimed by the Saudi Arabian Government. E 3944/77/91 (1935)

13. Moreover, it seems justifiable to contend, as the Saudi Arabian Government do, that in the absence of other indications the payment of 'zakat' (in the form of tribute or tax) may be regarded as the factor determining the allegiance of a particular tribe. The question to what extent it is advisable to invoke the payment of tribute as evidence of sovereignty has already formed the subject of exhaustive discussion. In his demi-official letter No. C-151 of the 28th March 1934, Sir T. Fowle maintained with regard to payments made by certain Arab sheikhs, including the Sheikh of Qatar, to Ibn Saud, that these payments could in no way be regarded as formal tribute, or as constituting a recognition of Ibn Saud as the overlord of the payers. The observations of Sir T. Fowle referred, however, only to payments made to Ibn Saud by the Sheikhs of Qatar and the Trucial States, whose independence of Saudi Arabia was in any case safeguarded by the special engagements existing between them and His Majesty's Government, which were recognised by the Saudi Arabian Government under article 6 of the Treaty of Jedda. Clearly there could be no question of these payments having involved in any way a recognition of Ibn Saud's overlordship. E 2097/279/91 (1934)

14. In the case of 'zakat' payments made by local tribal chiefs inhabiting territory to which no one has a legal claim and over which no ruler exercises any effective authority, the position is, however, somewhat different, since the status of those chiefs is nowhere established by treaty, and it may therefore be taken to depend on the degree of allegiance given by them to one or other of the recognised tribal rulers. Thus there would seem to be some force in the argument that in such cases the levy of 'zakat', whether it is called 'zakat' or by some other name, may be regarded as taxation and consequently as providing evidence of sovereignty, and it seems doubtful whether it can be successfully maintained as

as attempted in paragraph 7 of Bushire despatch No 594–S of the 29th June 1934, that the payment of tribute is in no way a sign of submission to Wahabi rule. The mere fact that Ibn Saud is able to exact such payments argues a considerable measure of control and authority over the tribes who pay it. This at least was the view put forward by Sir Andrew Ryan His Majesty's Minister in September 1934 and it seems in fact difficult to deny that in the absence of more solid evidence regarding the exercise of sovereignty in a particular area the question of the payment of tribute is an important consideration.

15. To sum up therefore it may be said that those territories to the east and south of the Blue and Violet lines of the 1914 Convention which are under no clearly defined sovereignty and to which no local Arab ruler has a valid claim either through the exercise of effective control over the area in question or on the basis of formal engagements with His Majesty's Government already existing in 1927 and recognising his authority over that area are territories to which the Saudi Arabian Government are legally entitled to put forward a claim and that in such cases the payment of tribute may in the absence of other indications properly be adduced as evidence of sovereignty. Having established this principle in judging the Saudi case it seems appropriate to consider briefly the main claims hitherto put forward by the Saudi Arabian Government i.e., their claims to the territory adjoining the Khor-el-Odeid on west of the Persian Gulf to the south east of the Qatar peninsula, and to the Jebel Nakhsh a mountain area to the south west of the Qatar peninsula claims to which the present deadlock in the frontier negotiations is mainly attributable as well as the claims advanced by them in regard to the other sections of the frontier.

(B)—*The Saudi Claim to the Khor-el-Odeid.*

16. This is based (a) on historical arguments, and (b) on tribal allegiance.

17. An effective refutation of (a) was contained in the note given to Sheikh Yusuf Yasin by Mr Rendel after the conversation recorded in the enclosure to Jeddah despatch No 47 of the 20th March 1937 (Eastern (Arabia) Print of the 18th April, 1937, Section 1). As stated already, the historical arguments put forward by the Saudi Arabian Government have not much force.

18. As regards (b), the Saudi Arabian Government claim that the tribes of the Khor-el-Odeid owe allegiance to Ibn Saud. This contention is supported by some of the available information, e.g. the statement made to Sir T. Fowle in 1934 by the Sheikh of Qatar to the effect that "a neutral zone between Qatar and Abu Dhabi extended along the coast and some miles in and from Khor Odeid to Sabkhat Matti but that this zone was not recognised by Ibn Saud who took the revenue from it because he was strong enough to do so" (see Sir T. Fowle's telegram No 1 98 of the 6th April 1934 paragraph 3 (e)). The alleged existence of a "neutral zone" is also mentioned in paragraph 2 of the enclosure to the letter No C 17 of the 18th January 1934 from the Political Agent Koweit to Sir T. Fowle. As against this, however, Bahrein confidential despatch No C 965-1 in 38 of the 12th December 1934 and its enclosure suggest of the strength of assertions by the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi and his family that Ibn Saud has no claim to any part of the coast between Qatar and the Musandam peninsula which belongs to one or other of the Trucial Sheikhs.

19. The practical justification for Ibn Saud's claim to the Khor-el-Odeid is thus at best doubtful. But whatever foundation it might otherwise have had is weakened by the evidence which can be derived from the attitude of His Majesty's Government in the past. Thus in 1878 Sheikh Zaid of Abu Dhabi was assisted in sending an expedition to exterminate the pirates of Odeid. The pirates fled before the expedition arrived but it was made clear that He Majesty's Government regarded the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi as responsible for what happened at Odeid and recognised that place as his territory. Later in 1890 Sheikh Yasin bin Thani of Qatar was told in reply to his enquiries that His Majesty's Government could not agree to his rebuilding Odeid "as the place is an appanage of Abu Dhabi". Again, in 1891, when the Ottoman Government tried to send a mudir to Odeid diplomatic representations were immediately made on the ground that Odeid belonged to Abu Dhabi, and the Ottoman Government abandoned their project in consequence.

20. Finally, in 1906, His Majesty's Government gave an undertaking to the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi whereby they recognised the Khor el Odeid as belonging to that ruler and undertook to prevent anyone else from occupying it. This assurance was contained in a letter dated the 1st December, 1906 from Major (later Sir Percy) Cox to Sheikh Zaid-bin-Khalifa, in which the latter was informed that—

> "while they (*i.e.*, His Majesty's Government) recognise that the place is in your territory and are prepared to prevent its occupation by anyone else but yourself they are not satisfied that its reoccupation by you would have any good or peaceful result, and for that reason are not inclined to assist you in reoccupying the place."

(See in this connexion the second enclosure in Jedda despatch No. 47 of the 27th March 1937 Eastern (Arabia, Persia) of the 19th April 1937 section 1.) K 2194 268/91 (1937)

21. Since by Article 6 of the Treaty of Jedda the Saudi Arabian Government undertook to recognise the special treaty relations existing between His Majesty's Government and the Trucial Sheikhdoms it seems logical to regard that undertaking as applying also to the engagement whereby His Majesty's Government recognised the sovereignty of the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi over the Khor el Odeid. It may be argued that the Saudi Arabian Government are thus committed to similar recognition, assuming (on the basis of the maxim *caveat emptor*) the onus of ascertaining the territorial position to have lain upon them had they had any doubts about it, when signing the Treaty of Jedda, and it is doubtful whether their claim is legally tenable, whether they were specifically aware of the 1906 assurance or not.

22. It may be added that the Saudi Arabian Government do not base their claim to the Khor-el-Odeid on purely legal grounds. They also maintain—

(a) that they need an additional outlet to the Persian Gulf more easy to develop and more accessible than their ports to the north of the Qatar peninsula;

(b) that they need to be able to control smuggling from that part of the coast into Saudi Arabia.

Their attitude is no doubt also influenced by considerations of prestige and by a desire to secure as much territory as possible which may contain oil.

(C)—*The Saudi claim to the Jebel Nakhsh*

23. With regard to the Jebel Nakhsh the position is more doubtful. The case for claiming it for the Sheikh of Qatar rests mainly on two arguments, viz. —

(a) that in the past that area has been commonly regarded as falling within the State of Qatar, and

(b) that topographically the Jebel Nakhsh forms part of the range of hills known as the Jebel Dukhan which runs along the west coast of Qatar, and therefore properly belongs to the Qatar peninsula.

24. As regards (a) it will be seen from paragraph 4 of India Office memorandum R 430 of the 5th March 1934, that according to the information contained in Lorimer's *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf*, the southern boundary of Qatar was before the 1914-18 war, considered to run roughly south-east from the Dohat-es-Salwa to a point to the north of the Khor el Odeid. As against this the 1913 convention (which was, however, later in date than Mr. Lorimer's work) definitely speaks of the blue line separating Ottoman territory from "the territory of Qatar." Lorimer admits, however, that the Qatar boundary was "somewhat indeterminate" in the part towards the Khor-el-Odeid and although care was taken to collect what evidence was available, the above description of the pre-war boundary does not seem to have been based on any positive knowledge, but simply on what was, at the time, vaguely considered to be the true position. It has been suggested that the claim of the Sheikh of Qatar to the whole of the Qatar peninsula was recognised by Ibn Saud on the occasion of his interview with Sir Percy Cox at Ojair in 1923, when he apparently accepted without demur the latter's statement that he had no rights X 1512 279 VI 1934

E 1819/379/91 (1934)
E 1513/91/91 (1934)

in the Qatar peninsula (see paragraphs 6 and 7 and section IV of the Appendix in India Office memorandum B 430 of 1934, and paragraph 10 of Colonel Dickson's letter No. C/17 of the 18th January, 1934, to the Political Resident); but in view of the informal nature of the 1923 discussions it is doubtful whether much reliance can be placed on this argument. Moreover, at this meeting Sir Percy Cox seems to have suggested a line which pushed the Saudi frontier back to the west of the southern part of the Blue line. It seems unlikely that on this point, at any rate, Ibn Saud can have fully understood what was proposed.

25. As regards (*b*) of paragraph 23, it is doubtful whether this can be regarded as a legal argument at all in the strict sense, although from a practical point of view it is certainly telling; but it would lose much of its force were there any way of showing that the Saudi Government were in fact, in a position to put forward a valid claim to other parts of Qatar as well as the Jebel Nakhah.

26. At any rate when His Majesty's Government on the 10th July, 1935, approved the Qatar oil concession obtained by the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company on the 17th May, 1935, they recognised the southern frontier of Qatar for the first time and they did so by unhesitatingly acknowledging it to be the line shown in the map attached to the concession agreement as the boundary of the concession area (*i.e.* a line leaving the Dohat es Salwa about 8 miles north of Salwa, running south eastwards for about 12 miles so as to leave the Jebel Nakhah in Qatar and then practically due east for another 45 miles or so to a point in the Persian Gulf about 8 miles north of the Khor el Odeid). At the same time the Sheikh of Qatar was given a guarantee of protection against external aggression.

27. It may be mentioned here that, while the negotiations for the oil concession were in progress and before the Sheikh had indicated that he considered what eventually became the boundary of the concession area to be the southern frontier of his State, the territory in respect of which His Majesty's Government proposed to promise him protection had been defined provisionally as extending to the south of a line drawn straight across from the head of the Dohat es Salwa to the coast named a very north of the Khor el Odeid. The so called "protection line" lay in places several miles to the south of the Qatar frontier as later defined in the oil concession but its location was never indicated to the Sheikh, who was simply assured of protection "against serious and unprovoked attacks on your territory from outside your frontier."

28. In one important respect the assurance of His Majesty's Government in respect of the Jebel Nakhah differs from that in respect of the Khor el Odeid. The assurance about the latter was given in 1916, long before the present frontier dispute had arisen. But the assurance about the former was given somewhat hastily, as has since transpired, six weeks after the Saudi Arabian Government had put forward on the 3rd April, 1935, claims which embraced the Jebel Nakhah. It can however be said that the Qatar frontier as finally recognised on the 10th July, 1935, was the outcome of occurrences dating from before the 3rd April, 1935. The Saudi Arabian Government protested against the oil concession at the time.

E 6734/379/91 (1937)

29. With regard to the Saudi claims to this area it will be seen from paragraph 4 of Bushire despatch No. 594 S of the 20th June, 1937, and the data in Table B enclosed therein, that Ibn Saud can have very little claim of an "ancestral" nature to the Jebel Nakhah. His claim, in fact, rests mainly on the argument that the tribes which frequent this area owe allegiance to him, although at one moment the Saudi Arabian Government maintained in addition, that Ibn Saud's right to the Jebel Nakhah had been recognised by the Sheikh of Qatar in an agreement alleged to have been made before the conclusion of the Anglo-Qatar Treaty in 1916 (see paragraph 5 of Sir A. Ryan's despatch No. 351 of the 10th December, 1935); this appears, however, to have been subsequently abandoned (see enclosure to Sir A. Ryan's despatch No. 169 of the 2nd June, 1936).

E 7674/91 (1935)
E 3734/91 (1936)

30. Much of the evidence available, however, tends to confirm the truth of the Saudi Arabian Government's contention that many of the inhabitants of the Jebel Nakhah owe allegiance to Ibn Saud. In paragraph 4 of his telegram No. T 19 of the 11th January, 1934, to the India Office Sir T. Fowle observed that "the Sheikh of Qatar is more a large merchant than a ruler and has practically no authority over the interior of his State ... where the strongest Bedouin elements are migratory tribes from Saudi Arabia." This evidence is

further confirmed by the information contained in paragraph 6 of Colonel Dickson's letter No. 6–17 of the 18th January, 1934, to the Political Resident, and in the enclosure therein, where it is observed that the Sheikh of Qatar "has no tribe which he can claim as his own in Qatar . . . Ibn Thani (the Sheikh of Qatar) depends for his fighting force on men drawn from the Bani Hajar and the Bani Murra, two of the three tribes pasturing along the border of Qatar. The third tribe is al Manasir."

31. To sum up, it may be that the Saudi Arabian Government do not administer the Jebel Nakhsh, even though they may say they do and even though the tribes of the area pay them tribute as a means of securing themselves against raids by tribes under effective Saudi control. But neither does, for that matter, the Sheikh of Qatar, and since this territory is directly ruled by nobody the most logical course might be, were it not for extraneous commitments, to attribute it to the Power to whom the local tribes recognise their allegiance. Indeed, from the evidence at present available it seems that the Sheikh of Qatar exercises little, if any, authority over most of the Qatar peninsula, let alone Jebel Nakhsh. Furthermore, the boundaries of his State were never clearly defined until in 1935, they were shown in the Qatar oil concession agreement to be the same as the limits of the area of the concession itself.

32. In these circumstances, it is difficult to rebut an argument to the effect that much of what has been regarded and recognised as Qatar territory is *res nullius*, as defined by Mr. Beckett in his minute of the 29th August, 1934, since the Sheikh of Qatar exercises no control over it and has no demonstrably valid claim to it, and that the Sheikh was exceeding his rights in including the Jebel Nakhsh or any other part of such territory in the area of the 1935 concession. The argument is strengthened by the consideration which has already been discussed, that the position of local tribal chiefs exercising an established rule is fundamentally different from that of the rulers of recognised States whose independence is continually recognised or guaranteed by His Majesty's Government, and that in the case of the former the payment of tribute may legitimately be taken as a factor determining their allegiance to any particular ruler and consequently establishing their political status. If on this basis it can be shown that the local tribes owe allegiance to Ibn Saud, as appears to be the case, the latter may well consider himself fully justified in claiming the territory in question for Saudi Arabia.

(D)—*The Saudi claim to territory otherwise claimed for Abu Dhabi, Muscat and the Aden Protectorate.*

33. The Saudi Arabian claim to territory in South-Eastern Arabia formulated in 1934, is not limited to the Khor-el-Odeid and the Jebel Nakhsh, but also extends to territory otherwise claimed by the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi, the Sultan of Muscat, and certain rulers or tribes, of whom the most important is the Sultan of Shihr and Mokalla, in the Aden Protectorate. These claims appear, however, to be of less importance in Saudi eyes than the claims to the Khor-el-Odeid and the Jebel Nakhsh, and only require brief notice, particularly as the arguments advanced by Ibn Saud and the counter-arguments of His Majesty's Government do not differ materially from those employed by the two parties over the two principal claims.

34. With regard to territory claimed by Saudi Arabia, but belonging, if it belongs to anybody, to the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi, most of what has been said concerning the claim to the Khor-el-Odeid also applies to the claim to territory further south and east. The Saudi claim is based on historical arguments and on tribal allegiances, and His Majesty's Government's counter-argument is based mainly on Article 6 of the Treaty of Jedda, whereby the Saudi Arabian Government undertook to recognise the special treaty relations existing between His Majesty's Government and the Trucial Sheikhs.

35. In 1937 the question arose of determining the western frontiers of the territory of the Sultan of Muscat, so as to ensure that no offer made to Ibn Saud should unwittingly impinge on these frontiers. In spite of his suspicion and an ingrained unwillingness to formulate his claims with precision, the Sultan was finally persuaded to put forward a statement of the limits of the territory which he believed to belong to him. He stated that he would have no objection if the

eastern limits of the territory belonging to Ibn Saud were recognised as being defined by a line joining certain co-ordinates marked on a map which the Political Agent in Muscat had given him. These co-ordinates may for convenience be regarded as corresponding as follows with the key-posts of the "Riyadh line" (see paragraph 20 of the memorandum referred to at the beginning of this memorandum):

The intersection of 52° E. and 23° N.	C
The intersection of 54° 40′ E. and 22° 40′ N.	D
The intersection of 55° 40′ E. and 22° N.	E
The intersection of 55° E. and 20° N.	G
The intersection of 52° E. and 19° N.	H

In August of that year, the Foreign Office suggested to the India Office that communication might be addressed to the Sultan mentioning that His Majesty's Government had taken note of the fact that, while he could not state precisely the limits of his claims, he at any rate staked no claim to territory beyond the points D, E, G and H as defined by the above co-ordinates. It should be noted that, except for Dhofar, the hold of the Sultan over any territory west of the Hajar mountains is exceedingly precarious.

36. Along the frontier of the Aden Protectorate, the claims of Ibn Saud are mainly based upon the Dira of the Murra tribe, which ranges over large parts of Rub al Khali. The Aden Government maintain that tribes dependent on the Qu'aiti Sultan of Shihr and Mukalla (including tribes belonging to the Kathiri Sultan of Seiyun) and the Mahri Sultan of Kishn and Socotra range as far north, when in search of grazing grounds, as a line joining the intersection of meridian 55° E. with parallel 20° N. and the intersection of the V meridian with parallel 18° N., although in the last resort a line running some twenty or thirty miles further south might be conceded. The tribes mainly concerned are the Seiar, Awamir, Manahil and Mahra.

(b) *Conclusion*

37. The foregoing paragraphs show that the country adjoining the Khor Odeid as well as the Jebel Naqhab are areas inhabited by tribes who may owe allegiance and pay tribute to Ibn Saud and are at any rate probably beyond the effective control of the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi or the Sheikh of Qatar. In these circumstances Ibn Saud is legally entitled, in spite of the Anglo-Turkish Convention of 1914, to claim them as being under his sovereignty, but that His Majesty's Government are precluded from admitting this claim by reason of the fact that they have in the past formally acknowledged these areas to be within the territory of the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi and the Sheikh of Qatar respectively, notwithstanding the absence of any clear ground on which the claims to sovereignty of these Sheikhs could be sustained.

38. The steps which have been taken since 1934 to find a solution of the problem are the subject of a separate memorandum.

Eastern Department,
June 30, 1940.

Appendix.

Minute by Mr. W. E. Beckett

WE start from the position that Turkey, by the treaty of 1914, article 1, which accepted article 11 of the treaty of 1913, accepted the blue line as the limits of Turkish sovereignty in this part of the Arabian peninsula. From this it is clear that to the extent that Ibn Saud is the successor of the old Ottoman Empire in this part of the world and must base his claim on such succession, the blue line represents the limits of the territories which he acquired as Turkey's successor. I see that he was disposed to take the view that, even in 1913, Turkey was not the sovereign in this part of the world, that he was already the

an independent Power, and that Turkey's treaties were invalid because she was dealing with territories over which she had no sovereignty. This argument is, of course, disposed of by the treaty which Ibn Saud himself concluded with Turkey on the 15th May, 1914.

2. The foregoing, however, only amounts to this: as successor of Turkey he could not claim beyond the blue line, and he certainly was the successor of Turkey. But this is by no means the same thing as saying that Ibn Saud cannot, since that date, have acquired a sovereignty beyond the blue line, or that His Majesty's Government possess sovereignty right up to the blue line on the other side, or that any sheikh under their protection does so.

3. The subsequent questions for consideration fall substantially into two classes: (*a*) the question whether by our subsequent treaty negotiations with Ibn Saud His Majesty's Government have waived or lost any right that they may otherwise have possessed to hold Ibn Saud's territories to be limited by the blue line, and (*b*) whether, even if a negative answer is returned to (*a*), it must be admitted that a substantial portion of the territory east of the blue line is *res nullius*, and therefore as such (*i*) open to acquisition by occupation on the part of Ibn Saud, and (*ii*) not being under the sovereignty of His Majesty's Government or within the territory of any sheikhs under their protection, is an area where His Majesty's Government have no legal right to object to steps being taken by Ibn Saud in the direction of acquisition of sovereignty by occupation, even if he has not at present done sufficient to acquire a definitive title.

4. It must be remembered that under international law territory is either under the sovereignty of a member of the family of nations, or it is not. If it is not, then it is open to acquisition by occupation by another Power. Spheres of influence in international law, whatever their political significance, mean nothing at all. If a State admits it has not sovereignty over a territory, but only claims a sphere of influence over it, then apart from treaty and gat ous binding particular Powers not to enter the sphere of influence &c., legally any other Power can go there and take steps to make itself sovereign. I am well aware that from the political point of view spheres of influence may have great importance. It may be a ground upon which representations may be made to another State that its action in going there is provocative and unfriendly, and that it must not be surprised if its action provokes the resentment and retaliation which may follow upon provocative and unfriendly, but nevertheless perfectly legal, acts. Legally a sphere of influence is of no effect at all unless you have a specific treaty with the Power who is entering the zone, under which the latter has specifically undertaken not to do so.

5. The second point to be remembered is that under international law, to use the words of Huber as arbitrator in the Palmas Island award, "Territorial sovereignty cannot be limited to its negative side. Sovereignty over territory cannot consist in a mere right to keep other States out when the *so-disant* sovereign exercises no authority whatever there. If this is the position, then even if the *so-disant* sovereign had or gained a perfectly sound title, he will lose it if another State enters the territory and *de facto* exercises authority there for a sufficient period, and thus acquires a prescriptive right."

6. Applying these principles to the case of the territory immediately to the east of the blue line, it seems to be perfectly clear that neither His Majesty's Government nor any Arab State under their protection exercises any authority there. The Sheikh of Qatar, in whose name we should rise to claim the territory, has apparently never attempted to exercise authority up to the blue line, and may be even completely unaware that we are, as it were, attempting to incorporate it into his principality. Turkey, Ibn Saud's predecessor, did, it is true, implicitly agree in the 1914 treaty that the territory east of the line belonged to the sheikhdom of Qatar, but I do not think that even against Turkey this treaty would mean that Turkey had undertaken not to cross the line, and acquire sovereignty there by occupation if, in fact, the territory was *res nullius*, and the Sheikh of Qatar and His Majesty's Government did nothing to establish themselves there. Still less, I think, could it be said that this treaty had this legal effect as regards Ibn Saud as Turkey's successor. The facts being what they are, I think it is impossible really to establish that the area in fact belonged to the Sheikh of Qatar in 1914, and if this is so, I see no ground upon which His Majesty's Government could have established any title to it at that time. It was *res nullius*. The position is clearly weaker to-day because there is certainly some evidence

that Ibn Saud has in fact to some extent established his own authority there. I am not attempting to advise now whether the amount of authority Ibn Saud has exercised up to this date is sufficient to give him a title by occupation or prescription, or whether it is only a state of affairs which will produce this result in time if his present authority there is maintained and increased.

7. On these grounds I think that the territory immediately east of the blue line is at present either *res nullius* or (conceivably) in parts already under the sovereignty of Ibn Saud.

8. The second part of the case against His Majesty's Government when they seek to maintain that the blue line represents to-day the limits of Ibn Saud's dominions (as opposed to those which he could claim as successor to Turkey) is based upon the subsequent agreements and negotiations with him in 1915, 192[illegible] and 1927. It is true, as Sir A. Ryan states, that the agreements of 1915 and 192[illegible] appear to proceed upon the basis that Ibn Saud's territories and those of the Sheikh of Qatar, &c., are co-terminous, *i.e.*, that there is no vacuum between them; but this seems to me to be an argument which cuts both ways, though of course it does dispose of any case built up on a British sphere of influence as opposed to territory belonging to the dominions of the Sheikh of Qatar. But from the legal point of view the sphere of influence argument was clearly hopeless in any case, and any substantial use of it seems to be merely an admission of weakness on our part and a virtual giving away of any legal case that we may have. It is, of course, an argument against His Majesty's Government that in negotiating the 1915 agreement no mention whatever is made of the blue line. It is not by any means conclusive, because the agreement of 1915 proceeds on the footing that the boundaries of Ibn Saud on one hand and Qatar on the other are to be delimited by agreement. The most that can be said is that the 1915 agreement appears to proceed on the assumption that in the future delimitation by agreement the criterion should be the areas over which Ibn Saud and his predecessors and the Sheikh of Qatar, &c., possessed in the past, and this rather suggests that we did not think the blue line agreement with Turkey was necessarily to be relevant. This is of course not conclusive, because it may well be that Ibn Saud and his predecessors could not readily establish claims on past history to territory passing the blue line or even coming anywhere near it, and we would not put the blue line into the agreement because we were not then prepared to admit that we could establish a claim that ever went as far as this. I doubt very much if the 1927 treaty carries the matter any further. The 1922 agreement relates to an area which is so far distant from the blue line that it can hardly be said to be directly relevant at all. The most that can be said about it is that the frontier with Koweit there agreed upon is quite different from that laid down in the treaty with Turkey of 1913 and once again the arrangements with Turkey do not appear to have been taken as the basis for fixing the new frontiers. The argument is one which I think very conclusive, but is, of course, a straw which acquires some force when added to other indications of the same kind. More nearly relevant are the lines drawn by Sir Percy Cox in 1922 at Uqair and in the areas concerned in 1912. Para. 4 of the India Office memorandum: Sir Percy Cox drew a line indicating what he considered then to be Ibn Saud's limits, which follows quite a different course from the blue line, and there is perhaps a rather strong inference that the 1915 agreement with Ibn Saud did not regard the blue line to be relied upon when the frontier delimitation contemplated by that agreement was taking place.

9. The conclusion to be drawn from all this is that, while we are perfectly justified to use the blue line and the position of Ibn Saud as a successor to Turkey, &c., as much as we can in negotiating with Ibn Saud in order to secure the most acceptable frontier possible in wording future agreements, I do not think we should win before a tribunal deciding the matter on legal principles if the issue was whether the area immediately east of the blue line was a part of the territory of the Sheikh of Qatar, a British protected principality, or it was *res nullius*, whether Ibn Saud was free to acquire territory by occupation or prescription, if he could produce evidence of the state of affairs necessary to support such a claim.

W. E. BECKETT

August 29, 1934

[E 2203/2203/25] No. 82.

ADDITIONAL MEMORANDUM ON THE SUBJECT OF THE CORRESPONDENCE EXCHANGED DURING 1938 AND 1939 BETWEEN THE FOREIGN OFFICE AND THE INDIA OFFICE ON THE SUBJECT OF THE PROPOSED CESSION OF KHOR-EL-ODEID TO THE GOVERNMENT OF SAUDI ARABIA

WHEN in March 1938 Sir R. Bullard received Fuad Bey's plan for the settlement of the question of the south-eastern frontiers of Saudi Arabia(1), of which the basis was the cession of either the Jebel Nakhah or Khor-el-Odeid by His Majesty's Government to Saudi Arabia, His Majesty's Minister gave the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs no hint that he thought a compromise on these lines possible, and said that any reply he gave would be purely personal.

2. For reasons explained elsewhere(1) it was impossible to consider the cession of the Jebel Nakhah, and it was decided therefore to invite the views of His Majesty's Minister at Jedda, the Government of India and the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf on the proposal to cede the area adjoining the Khor el Odeid.

3. In his report to the Foreign Office, Sir R. Bullard stated that in his opinion the scheme proposed offered the possibility of a final removal of the sole major obstacle to Anglo-Saudi relations—other than Palestine.

4. The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf and the Government of India, however, put forward strong arguments against any further concession and these considerations were repeated and reinforced in a letter which the India Office sent to the Foreign Office on the 3rd May 1938.

5. The importance of retaining and [illegible] Ibn Saud's goodwill towards His Majesty's Government was acknowledged in this letter, but doubts were raised as to whether the offer of the cession of Khor-el-Odeid would go far towards promoting this aim while it would certainly be a grave source of danger to British influence amongst the Trucial Sheikhs in the Persian Gulf. The opinion expressed by Sir R. Bullard in March 1937 was quoted when he "doubted whether the transfer would be worth the missing sum so it would not give Ibn Saud the port he needs, where we should have to make a political sacrifice without gaining the advantage which I think we should expect to gain from any improvement in Ibn Saud's economic position. The cession of the Khor-el-Odeid would be impossible without the consent of the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi, and, as he was apparently in no danger from Saudi or Wahabi expansion it would be superfluous to offer him financial compensation; in fact, any attempt to purchase his consent would react most unfavourably on British prestige among the protected rulers in the Gulf. The Sheikh of Abu Dhabi could also reasonably expect an assurance that his frontier would be respected, and would probably demand not merely diplomatic intervention, but a guarantee of protection in the event of the violation of his territory. Finally, it was suggested that there were strong arguments against allowing Saudi Arabian expansion on the Trucial Coast and allowing the line of protected States to be broken. It was maintained that these arguments had lost none of their former validity; that the strategic importance of the area along the Arabian coast of the Gulf precluded any weakening of British influence among the minor sheikhs; and that the increase of Ibn Saud's influence at the expense of His Majesty's Government, and the impression which might be spread abroad that His Majesty's Government were in fact afraid of him would be particularly unfortunate at a moment when the Trucial Sheikhs were in a difficult mood and inclined to flout the wishes of His Majesty's Government.

E 2670/50/91 (1938)

6. After two months the Foreign Office replied on the 1st July in a letter which set forth the point of view as a result of which the offer of cession of the Khor-el-Odeid had been proposed. The European crisis and the manifest deterioration of the situation in Palestine had made it absolutely essential to do everything possible to retain the goodwill of Ibn Saud and to strengthen him in his dealings with his own subjects and access to the Persian Gulf at a new point would be helpful in both directions. The rights of the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi extended in theory to the Blue line(1) of the Anglo-Ottoman Agreements of 1913 and 1914, but His Majesty's Government had had to recognise that he had not

E 2670/1807/91 (1938)

(1) See separate memorandum, with maps, entitled "The South Eastern Frontiers of Saudi Arabia." E 2203/2203/25. June 30, 1940. Confidential. No. 15096.

asserted his authority further than the Riyadh oasis(*) at the utmost and but in so far as he had failed to exercise his rights they had lapsed automatically to Ibn Saud as the result of a movement which had probably begun before the Blue Line was demarcated. Recent enquiries had shown that the control of the hinterland by the Trucial Sheikhs was not really effective, whereas Saudi officials had in fact of recent years penetrated as far as Baraimi. It was considered that the only way to check Ibn Saud's advance was a settled frontier and this either as a result of a unilateral declaration by His Majesty's Government or as a result of a compromise between Ibn Saud and His Majesty's Government. From the point of view of His Majesty's Government the second alternative was far and away the better. This could only be secured by coming to Ibn Saud either the Jebel Naqhsh (which was impossible(*)) or the Khor-el Odeid. It was suggested that the surrender of this small area of empty desert would be a matter of little consequence to the sheikh whereas it would please Ibn Saud both on the grounds of prestige and as a possible corridor for an oil pipe-line. If this argument had no force with the sheikh it was suggested that some compensation would have to be considered either in the form of a money payment or a guarantee that in the event of aggression His Majesty's Government would afford him more than merely diplomatic intervention. Payment of a sum of money was distasteful in that it brought a questionable element into a settlement which really could be justified on its merits, but if some such arrangement was essential His Majesty's Government might to be prepared to pay £25,000 or even more to secure a settlement. The alternative, an assurance of protection, could not be taken to apply to tribal raids from Saudi Arabia and the undertaking should be so worded that it applied only in the event of a major aggression against Abu Dhabi on the part of the territorial sovereign on the other side of the frontier. The Foreign Office were inclined to think that some such settlement would not materially increase in practice the responsibilities of His Majesty's Government in that area. Their interests in the air route and in oil made it necessary make it impossible for them to be indifferent to any threat to the territories of the Trucial Sheikhs. The Foreign Office agreed, however, that every effort should be made to avoid giving the additional commitment involved in a definite guarantee of any frontier which might be subsequently demarcated and to limit our support to a promise of energetic intervention with Ibn Saud or his successors should they disregard the new frontiers. It was suggested that His Majesty's Government had in this matter a right to insist on their point of view since in fact the Trucial Sheikhs could not hold out for a day against Ibn Saud without His Majesty's Government's protection and support. The danger that might result from a diminution of the prestige of His Majesty's Government in the Persian Gulf was clearly realised but the Foreign Office did not share the India Office's view that this would be the inevitable consequence of the proposed action. "It might indeed be represented to the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi that Ibn Saud is the friend of the English and has throughout his career shown certain lesser Arab rulers of no importance who are ignorant of world affairs shown himself consistently well disposed to His Majesty's Government and anxious in all circumstances to consult their interests, so that His Majesty's Government for their part have no hesitation in asking the sheikh to contribute his share towards an agreement which is considered to be advantageous to all parties. As for the objection raised by the Government of India that there were political reasons against breaking the chain of territories under British control extending from Qatar to Muscat, the Service Departments concerned were understood to be satisfied that no strategical advantage would accrue from Saudi possession of Khor-el Odeid. Finally a fixed frontier would have the effect of setting a limit to Saudi Arabian expansion.

[* 3079 1607 91 (1938)]

7. The next move took the form of a letter written by the India Office after consultation with the Government of India, on the 7th October, 1938, in which they reaffirmed their determined opposition to ceding the Khor-el Odeid to Ibn Saud. The arguments that the sheikh would think either that we were afraid of Ibn Saud or that we were not scrupulous of the observance of our undertakings were adhered to, while it was considered that the cession would really have no material effect on the attitude of Ibn Saud in the Palestine

(*) See memorandum referred to in footnote (*).

(*) Owing to the attitude of Petroleum Concessions Limited. See memorandum referred to in footnote (*).

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8. This letter was accompanied by a private letter from the Secretary of State for India to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, stating that he had consulted the Viceroy and found him most strongly impressed by the force of the views held by the Government of India on the subject. While Lord Zetland sympathised with the aim which the Foreign Office had in view, he felt that the proposal was unwise and prejudicial to His Majesty's Government's own interests, and hoped that the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs would agree not to pursue the matter any further. E. 5861/150/91 (1938)

9. On the 19th January, 1939, a reply was sent from the Foreign Office to the India Office letter of the 7th October, 1938, expressing regret that the Government of India should have felt it necessary to maintain their opposition to the proposal put forward by the Foreign Office, as this rejection rendered it impossible to take advantage of the personal suggestion of the previous year by Fuad Bey to Sir R. Bullard; and indicating that, if His Majesty's Government refused to discuss a compromise solution on the basis proposed, it was not at all clear how any settlement of the frontier question could ever be reached. It was pointed out that not only were the proposals for a settlement of the frontier question justifiable on their own merits and in the interests of the Trucial Sheikhs, it was to the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi's advantage to have a definite frontier guaranteed throughout by His Majesty's Government, even though that frontier embraced slightly less territory than an indefinite frontier of which only a small section was guaranteed by His Majesty's Government. The Khor-el-Odeid was a small price to pay for this advantage. Moreover some settlement of this long-out-standing question was most desirable from the point of view of Anglo-Saudi relations. E. 5861/150/91 (1938)

10. To the argument employed by the India Office that Ibn Saud would be unlikely to respect a frontier line agreed upon between himself and His Majesty's Government, since his policy in recent years had been to advance his influence and his rule gradually and almost imperceptibly towards the coast in spite of protests by His Majesty's Government, it was urged that it was exactly the absence of a fixed frontier that had enabled Ibn Saud to extend his influence gradually over the territories of tribes which owed no allegiance to any other leader, and it was with the intention of arresting this process of encroachment that the Foreign Office had made proposals for a fixed frontier. If the frontier question remained unsettled, the process of encroachment would continue in such a way that Ibn Saud would probably eventually extend his rule over further territories till at length his domains would stretch to the shores of the Khor-el-Odeid. It was possible that, having regard to the general position in the Middle East and to the international situation, His Majesty's Government might not then be able to make more than a diplomatic protest to the Saudi Arabian Government, in which event the ultimate result would be infinitely more damaging to the prestige of His Majesty's Government and the Government of India in the Persian Gulf area than the settlement proposed by the Foreign Office in the preceding July. Finally, emphasis was laid on the importance of retaining Ibn Saud's good will (since, except for the question of Palestine, this frontier question was regarded by Ibn Saud as the only serious difficulty existing between himself and His Majesty's Government) if only in the interests of His Majesty's Government's own position in the Middle East in the event of an international emergency. If His Majesty's Government and the Government of India, whenever the question was raised on the Saudi Arabian side, showed that their only wish was to leave the matter in abeyance for an indefinite period, while refusing to admit Ibn Saud's claims to the Jebel Naksh and the Khor-el-Odeid, it would be difficult to prevent Ibn Saud from feeling resentment at the arbitrary manner in which his claims had been treated, and in the event of an international emergency it would be all the easier for His Majesty's Government's enemies to influence Ibn Saud by a promise of full satisfaction of his territorial claims if he abandoned his traditional policy of friendship with Great Britain. The letter concluded with a suggestion that the whole question might be discussed orally between representatives of the Foreign Office and the India Office at an informal meeting.

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91 (1939)

11. In pursuance of this latter suggestion and as a result of the divergence of opinion on this matter which existed between the India Office and the Foreign Office, a meeting was held on the 2nd February, 1939, between representatives of the Foreign Office and the India Office with a view to finding some method of preventing the negotiations for the settlement of the dispute from reaching a complete deadlock. A suggestion was made by the representative of the Foreign Office that an offer should be made to Ibn Saud to submit the question of the south-eastern boundaries to arbitration, and the representatives of the India Office promised that, if the Foreign Office would state their proposals in writing, the Secretary of State for India would be prepared, in consultation with the Government of India, to consider them.

12. On the 6th April, therefore, an informal letter was sent by the Foreign Office to the India Office setting out ideas for a procedure whereby the question might be prevented from reaching deadlock and discussing various aspects regarding the scope and nature of arbitration and the choice of the arbitrator. It was pointed out that, in this question, His Majesty's Government stood in relation to the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi in two separate capacities—as the Power which was internationally responsible for his actions, and as the Power which was responsible to him only for the Khor-el-Odeid. The fact that His Majesty's Government told the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi in 1906 that they regarded certain areas as lying in his territory did not constitute proof that that area did in his territory, or invalidate any claims which a third party, e.g. Saudi Arabia, might have to it; and if that party put forward these claims, His Majesty's Government in their capacity as the Power responsible for Abu Dhabi must, even out of mercy being bourly good feeling, take all responsible steps to reach a just settlement without regard to the difficulties in which their actions might involve them in their capacity as guarantor. In the second case, it was suggested that if His Majesty's Government could not grant Ibn Saud his request or even offer him a procedure by which he stood a chance of getting what he asked if he could make out any adequate case without breaking the pledge made to a neighbouring sheikh, His Majesty's Government would have to find some method of compensating the sheikh in other directions. With regard to the nature of the pledge given in 1906 by His Majesty's Government to the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi it seemed to the Foreign Office to be clearly a pledge on the part of His Majesty's Government to use their best endeavours to prevent the occupation by any other ruler of the area of undefined extent adjoining the Khor-el-Odeid. But the form of His Majesty's Government's endeavours would necessarily vary with the circumstances, and if, as a result of the employment of diplomatic methods, including, it might be, arbitration or mediation, the third party could make a justifiable claim to the area, it did not seem that His Majesty's Government would remain under an obligation to resist by forcible methods the occupation of the area by the third party. His Majesty's Government could not do more for their client than they could do for themselves in similar circumstances, and it was suggested that the client similarly could not expect His Majesty's Government to do more on his behalf than the intrinsic merits of his case permitted. It was also suggested that, if Ibn Saud wished to dispute the legal claim of the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi and to claim that he was in law the owner of the territory, the 1906 pledge could not possibly mean that his Majesty's Government were bound to resist Ibn Saud by force and to refuse to submit the legal question to arbitration, which would be the normal course. His Majesty's Government did so, it would be quite inconsistent with their continual professions of attachment in principle to pacific settlement of international disputes. In conclusion, the Foreign Office asked that the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi should be warned that His Majesty's Government might find it necessary to agree that the question of the frontier including the section near Khor-el-Odeid, should be submitted to some form of peaceful settlement, such as arbitration, and that, if this should prove to be the case, His Majesty's Government would support his claims to the utmost of their ability. If such arbitration eventually left him, as it certainly would, with a clearly-defined frontier which Saudi Arabia had undertaken to respect, it seemed to His Majesty's Government that that would conduce far more strongly to the security of his sheikhdom than the present state of affairs. It was, of course, added that, if the sheikh expressed strong objection to any proposal of this nature or asked whether any guarantee by His Majesty's Government of his new frontier would be forthcoming, the question would require further consideration.

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13. The India Office, on receipt of this letter consulted all the local authorities concerned, but although the Governor of Aden and the Resident at Mukalla were quite prepared to agree to the arbitration of the Saudi Protectorate frontier if the question were decided on purely legal grounds, the India Office reply of the 10th August stated that neither the Government of India nor the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf found it possible to support the proposed offer to submit the dispute to arbitration. The Government of India even felt considerable doubt whether an offer of arbitration would be welcome to Ibn Saud himself, and both they and the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf reiterated the argument that the mere suggestion to the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi that His Majesty's Government were contemplating arbitration in respect of territory which had been regarded as his possession for over a few years would have a very damaging effect on His Majesty's Government's general prestige and influence in the Persian Gulf, the Political Resident added the warning that the submission of the Khor el Odeid issue to arbitration would constitute a most dangerous precedent for the disposal of other claims to the territory of Persian Gulf rulers who enjoyed the protection of His Majesty's Government.

14. Apart from the difficulties with regard to the choice of arbitrators, the terms of reference and the scope of the arbitration proceedings which were expounded in the Foreign Office letter, the India Office felt that in the light of the opinion of the local authorities, His Majesty's Government could not undertake to solicit the consent of the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi. If the sheikh had agreed to arbitration and the award went against him, he might well enquire what security he would have in the future against encroachments on the rest of his territory, since the mere fact that His Majesty's Government were prepared to go back on their guarantee in respect of the Khor el Odeid showed that no reliance could be placed by him on any subsequent similar undertaking.

15. To arouse doubts of this nature with regard to His Majesty's Government's good faith in the minds of the Arab rulers of the Persian Gulf would, in the opinion of the India Office, be no less dangerous to our interests in the Middle East from the strategical point of view than the raising of dissatisfaction on the part of the Saudi Arabian Government. Should His Majesty's Government maintain their previous attitude in the question of the frontiers and in view of the fact that Ibn Saud had not even made any reference to the matter in a letter which he had just addressed to the Prime Minister, the India Office could not believe that a refusal to meet Ibn Saud's wishes would seriously prejudice Anglo-Saudi relations; they suggested that the question should be allowed to rest in the meantime, in the hope that the Saudi Arabian Government would be content not to raise the matter again. It was the India Office's view that, if at some subsequent period it became necessary for His Majesty's Government to give a definite answer, this should be to the effect that after the fullest consideration His Majesty's Government regretted that undertakings to other rulers made it impossible for them to entertain the claim of the Saudi Arabian Government to territorial concessions in the Trucial Coast area.

16. Subsequent to the receipt of this letter by the India Office no further development occurred during 1939.

Eastern Department,
June 30, 1940.

[E 1963/196/93] No. 83.

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received July 10.)

(No. 306.)
My Lord, *Baghdad, June 27, 1940.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram No. 97 of the 18th April, I have the honour to inform you that the adviser to the Ministry of the Interior recently reported to me that the Iraqi Government had agreed to the appointment of Dr. Hasan Sadiq, Permanent Under Secretary in the Egyptian Ministry of Finance, to be president of the Joint Commission for the Demarcation of the Saudi-Iraqi Frontier.

2. It will be recalled that in the notes exchanged between the Saudi and Iraqi Governments in 1938 on the subject of the demarcation of their common frontier (see my despatch No. 132 of the 5th April, 1938) it was provided that, after certain maps had been prepared, negotiations should take place between the two Governments to decide how the frontier line should pass through the groups of wells mentioned in the First Protocol of Uqair as salient points in the line.

3. I understand from Mr. Edmonds that both Governments have now agreed to leave this task to the Joint Demarcation Commission and to empower the president to give an arbitral decision in the event of a dispute between the Saudi and Iraqi representatives.

4. In this connexion it seems desirable to recall that the two extremities of the boundary, which are situated, in the east, at the point of junction of the wadi Al Awja with the wadi Al Batin (where the frontier joins that of Koweit), and, in the west, in the neighbourhood of the Jabal Anaza (where it joins that of Transjordan), have still to be fixed and that His Majesty's Government have an interest in the determination of these two points. I should therefore be glad to be instructed whether you wish me to inform the Iraqi Government that His Majesty's Government desire to be associated with the joint commission when they fix these two points.

5. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassador at Cairo, to His Majesty's High Commissioner for Palestine and to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.

I have, &c.
BASIL NEWTON

[E 2269/2055/25] No. 64

Mr. Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received July 11.)

(No. 137.)
(Telegraphic.) *Jedda, July 10, 1940.*

MY telegram No. 134.

1. Amir Feisal has left Jedda for Taif, but is returning within a few days.

2. At my last [group omitted] His Royal Highness barely mentioned Syria and I hope that this denotes that Ibn Saud is prepared to wait patiently on events, as he has been advised to do.

3. On the subject of France, Amir Feisal had much to say. He feels that France was alone to blame for her collapse. He cannot understand why France did not continue the struggle with a Government established elsewhere in advance [illegible] fleet. He regards the conquest of Britain as impossible and ultimate defeat of Germany as certain.

4. The Amir's views regarding France and British action against the fleet are [illegible] given orders for shipping to the Hej[illegible] with the scorn and derision it merits.

(Repeated to Cairo (for M.I.C.E.), No. 47, and Baghdad, No. 43.)

[E 2211 56 91] No. 85

Telegram to His Majesty the King of the Yemen (Sana'a) (from The King)

(*En clair*) *Foreign Office, July* 15, 1940

I THANK Your Majesty for your telegram of the 25th June, and much appreciate the friendly sentiments expressed therein.

I am sorry to learn that Your Majesty should have gained the impression that Mr Champion is ignoring the instructions of my Government. It is also with deep regret that I note that it has not been possible to reach a settlement of the questions which he was sent to Sana'a to discuss. I can assure Your Majesty that both the Government of Aden and Mr Champion have carried out faithfully [illegible] said on the subject of the frontier to Your Majesty's Minister. My Government believed that their generous proposals would at once be recognised by Your Majesty as satisfying the honour and the interests of both sides, and it is a [illegible] n the circumstances Your Majesty will, I am sure, agree that the best course will be to suspend the negotiations in order that they may be resumed at a more propitious moment and Mr Champion is being instructed to make a communication accordingly to Your Majesty's Ministers.

[illegible] long life, happiness and prosperity of yourself and the happiness and prosperity of your people.—GEORGE, R.I.

[E 2302 313 91] No. 86

Mr Stonehewer-Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received July 22.)

(No. 161.)
(Telegraphic.) *Jedda, July* 22, 1940.

FOLLOWING addressed to Bushire, telegram No. 19 (please repeat Bahrein):

"Sheikh Mohammed of Bahrein arrived here by plane from Egypt yesterday and left for Bahrein via Medina and Riyadh [illegible] The Amir came down to meet him and convey him to Mecca.

"2. I had a brief interview with him, in the course of which he expressed great admiration for the British fleet and air force and deep [illegible] He dwelt on the friendship of the British and Arabs, which he said was not only political, but personal."

[E 2260 2060 25] No. 87

Viscount Halifax to Mr Stonehewer-Bird (Jedda)

No. 103.
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, July* 24, 1940.

YOUR telegram No. 91 of 14th June. [illegible] have been further considered in the light of your comments as follows:

2. [illegible]

(i) Ibn Saud's present attitude of benevolent neutrality is well known throughout Arab and Moslem world, and from point of view of propaganda and prestige no strong advantage would be gained by [illegible] him to enter the war.

(ii) In certain hypothetical circumstances assistance of Ibn Saud and use of his territory might be of value, for example, in event of operations against aggression on Aden Protectorate from the Yemen or of [illegible]

3. Against advantages mentioned in (ii) must be set the following disadvantages:—

(a) If Ibn Saud declared war on Italy his coast would be liable to be attacked by sea and air, and with the forces at present available His Majesty's Government would not be in a position to guarantee protection against such attacks. Failure to afford him adequate protection after pressing him to become an Ally would have most damaging effect on British prestige.

(b) Ibn Saud would undoubtedly and quite reasonably demand assistance in money and arms as a prior condition. Former request might be met but it would be impossible to comply with the latter.

(c) It is probable that, as further condition for his assistance, Ibn Saud would press for modifications of the Palestine White Paper in favour of the Arabs which it would be impossible to accept.

4. It is felt, therefore, that no attempt should be made at the present time to induce Ibn Saud to enter the war as an ally. If he offers of his own accord to become an ally or is forced by Italian aggression to do so, a situation requiring separate consideration will obviously arise.

5. Meanwhile continuance of Ibn Saud's benevolent neutrality is of highest importance, and I should be grateful for your views whether there are any further steps which might be taken to ensure this.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 672 and Baghdad, No. 341.)

E 2320/2060/25] No. 88

Sir M. Lampson to Viscount Halifax.—(Received July 27.)

(No. 813.)
(Telegraphic.) *Cairo, July 27, 1940.*

FOLLOWING addressed to Jedda, No. 27, 27th July:—

"General Headquarters are informed from a source they consider reliable that Ibn Saud is about to appoint a Minister to Rome. Can you confirm?"

E 2320/2060/25] No. 89

Viscount Halifax to Mr. Stonehewer-Bird (Jedda).

(No. 119.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, August 2, 1940.*

CAIRO telegram No. 27 (of 27th July to you). Appointment of Saudi Minister to Rome.

His Majesty's Government would naturally prefer it if Ibn Saud refrained from reviving this idea at the present time. If you think it is, in fact, being revived and that report reaching General Headquarters is not merely an echo of position before Italy entered war, you may let this be understood in whatever manner you think best.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 732.)

E 1758/309/91] No. 90

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received August 3.)

(No. 411.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, August 3, 1940.*

POLITICAL Resident in Persian Gulf informs me that post, South Safwan, was removed by unknown persons in March 1939.

After having been previously removed [group undecypherable], after protest, restored by Basra police in 1932. Political agent, Koweit, replaced it on 9th June, 1940, but Iraqi authorities have again removed it on grounds that it was sited 250 metres within Iraqi territory. Further unilateral action might be provocative, and to arrange for post to be restored by agreement would delay

demarcation. I therefore suggest that the last two lines of the second point in the re[draft of] paragraph 2 enclosed in Foreign Office letter 5th May should be altered to read: "At which post and notice-board marking the frontiers stood until March 1939."

2. It will then be one of the duties of the Demarcation Commission to ass if our last three groups corrupt.

(Repeated to Shiraz, No. 20, and Koweit, No. 19.)

E 2308/66/91] No. 91

Mr. Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received August 7.)

(No. 175.)
(Telegraphic.) *Jedda, August 7, 1940.*

MY telegram No. 57.

Ibn Saud, in a message delivered to me by Qaimaqam y[illegible] that Imam Yahya has repeatedly approached him regarding his dispute with His Majesty's Government about Shabwa-al Abr and Habak. Imam's latest message reads, Ibn Saud states, as follows:—

"I am exerting every endeavour to see point of view and reach a friendly understanding with the British Government. Although it is believed I am with the Italians, my policy is merely one of courtesy, self defence and precaution. In spite of all my efforts, agreement has not been reached on the matters in dispute, which, of small importance in themselves, yet represent normal Yemeni aspirations. I therefore beg you, in view of good and friendly relations which I know exist between you and the British, to intervene with His Majesty's Government with a view to their viewing the matter with justice and tolerance and settling dispute in a spirit of friendship and good understanding."

[illegible] realises the circumstances in which His Majesty's Government is at present placed and does not wish to embarrass them. At the same time, he feels strongly that it is in the general interest to promote understanding between British and Arab Governments, and that in the present situation great advantage would accrue to His Majesty's Government from settlement of this dispute.

3. He consequently wishes to add his voice to that of Imam, and begs His Majesty's Government, with their wisdom and fairness, to find a solution which will meet requirements of the present situation.

4. I had learned from Middle East Intelligence Centre that negotiations with Imam have broken down but are to be resumed at a more propitious time but, pending instructions, I have merely thanked Ibn Saud for his information which I would, I said, communicate without delay to His Majesty's Government.

5. Ibn Saud is not, I think, proposing he should attempt to mediate. His object appears to stress possible danger of leaving the dispute unsettled and Imam disgruntled.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 56, Baghdad, No. 48, Aden, No. 25.)

E 1758/309/91] No. 92

Viscount Halifax to Sir B. Newton (Baghdad).

(No. 381.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, August 10, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 411 [of 3rd August, Koweit Iraqi frontier].

I agree to suggested redraft, though reference to a non existent post to which former location is disputed cannot be regarded as altogether satisfactory definition of a frontier point.

2. If Iraqi Government object to redraft it may be necessary to revert to original definition of a "point one mile due south of most southerly palm of Safwan."

(Repeated to Shiraz, No. 4576, and Koweit, No. 4575.)

E 2320 2060 25] No. 93

Mr Stonehewer-Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received August 11.)

(No. 182)
(Telegraphic) *Jedda, August 11, 1940*

YOUR telegram No. 109

The story is, as you assume, an echo of the report in April last of the choice [illegible] designate to Rome

2. One group undecypherable] told me privately to-day that there is no question of Hamza taking up his appointment

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 58.)

E 2374 2374 25] No. 94

Mr Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received August 12.)

(No. 184.)
(Telegraphic.) *Jedda August 12 1940*

SAUDI Arabian Minister in France recently telegraphed to Ibn Saud saying that he had been obliged to make a temporary stay in Paris, and had there received an invitation from Germans to visit Berlin for discussions on Arab affairs.

2. Ibn Saud informs me that he immediately replied instructing Fuad [illegible] permission. He must refuse invitation to visit Berlin, and must not enter into discussion with Germans on any matter whatsoever.

(Repeated to Cairo (for Middle East Intelligence Centre), No. 59, Bagdad, No. 50, Jerusalem, No. 43, Beirut, No. 2.)

E 2411 166 25 No. 95

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received August 15.)

(No. 327.)
My Lord, *Bagdad, July 12, 1940.*

WITH [illegible] to transmit to your Lordship herewith a note from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on the subject of the fixing of the western extremity of the Saudi-Iraqi frontier.

2. I should be glad to receive your Lordship's instructions regarding the [illegible]

3. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassador at Cairo, to His Majesty's High Commissioner for Palestine and Transjordan, Jerusalem, and to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.

I have, &c.
BASIL NEWTON

Enclosure in No. 95

Ministry for Foreign Affairs to His Majesty's Embassy, Bagdad

Bagdad, July 8, 1940.

THE Ministry for Foreign Affairs [illegible] His Britannic Majesty's Embassy Bagdad and, in continuation of the Ministry's note dated the 17th February, 1940, have the honour to refer to the question of fixing the point of intersection of latitude 32° north and longitude 39° east, and [illegible] Iraqi Government and the Arab-Saudi Kingdom for an Egyptian expert to take

part as arbitrator in the work of demarcation of the Iraqi-Saudi frontiers. The Ministry would, therefore, be glad to learn whether the appropriate British quarters agree to the problem of fixing the said point of intersection being referred to the said expert for a decision in the light of treaties in force.

In awaiting a reply, the Ministry avail themselves of the opportunity to express their highest consideration and esteem.

E 2374 2374 25] No. 96

Viscount Halifax to Mr Stonehewer-Bird (Jedda).

(No. 118.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Foreign Office, August 16, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 184 [of 12th August: German invitation to Saudi Arabian Minister in France to visit Berlin.]

Please convey to Ibn Saud His Majesty's Government's appreciation of his action in this matter.

E 2409 56 91] No. 97

Viscount Halifax to Mr Stonehewer-Bird (Jedda).

(No. 124.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, August 19, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 175 [of 7th August: Negotiations with the Yemen.]

Position is that final offer of neutralisation of Shabwa and El Abr was made to the King of the Yemen (see my telegram No. 28 [of 22nd March]). Imam rejected this offer and accompanied his rejection by extravagant claims to unqualified cession to him by His Majesty's Government of large areas of Aden Protectorate. In the circumstances, it appeared useless to continue further negotiations and Mr Champion was instructed to leave Sanaa after making to the Imam a suitable communication which left the door open for resumption should the Imam at any time desire to reopen discussions on basis of this offer.

2. [illegible] of Ibn Saud by the Saudi Arabian Minister. Sheikh Hafiz Wahba was assured that His Majesty's Government at all times valued the advice of Ibn Saud and that they were still anxious, as they had always been, to come to an amicable settlement with the Imam. The facts were, however, that Shabwa and El Abr [illegible] territory by hundreds of miles of waterless desert, that their occupation by the Power controlling the Aden Protectorate constituted no menace to the Yemen, while, on the contrary, their occupation by the Power controlling the Yemen would provide that Power with a base for aggression against, or infiltration into, the Aden Protectorate. These places had no value for the Yemen except as such a base, but El Abr at least was of some value to the Hadramaut States as a centre for preventing raids into the Hadramaut Valley. These places were, in the view of His Majesty's Government, legally a part of the Aden Protectorate and the [illegible] treaty to protect. The sudden demand of the King of the Yemen two or three [illegible] circumstances, His Majesty's Government had gone beyond the requirements of generosity in offering, without any compensating advantage or concession on the part of the King of the Yemen, to refrain from exercising their undoubted right to occupy or administer them either directly or through the rulers of the Hadramaut States. Since the King of the Yemen had rejected this very generous offer, His Majesty's Government were reluctantly compelled to discontinue negotiations until a more propitious time.

3. You may, if you see no objection, reply to Ibn Saud in the sense of the foregoing paragraphs.

(Repeated to Bagdad, No. 420, Cairo, No. 821, and Aden, No. 408.)

E 2430 27 91] No. 98

Communicated by India Office (Received August 19)

(Confidential)

THE Honourable the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf presents his compliments to, (1) R. T. Peel, Esq., C.B.E., M.C., the India Office, London, (2) O. K. Caroe, Esq., C.I.E., I.C.S., Secretary to the Government of India, External Affairs Department, Simla, and has the honour to transmit to them a copy of a letter of the 20th June, 1940, from the Political Agent, Koweit respecting public opinion.

2. The question of an adviser is being borne in mind.

Bushire, July 3, 1940.

Enclosure in No. 98

Mr. Galloway to Lieutenant-Colonel Prior

(Confidential)

My dear Colonel, *Koweit, June 20, 1940.*

SINCE the beginning of the war I have been sending brief situation reports, which I will now amplify by considering each main section of the [illegible] separately. Anti British feelings are part and parcel of anti Subah feelings and possibly are only pro-German as that is a popular method of expressing dissatisfaction with the present order.

2. *The Subah Family.*—His Highness, I believe, at the outbreak of war was only half hearted in his support of Britain. The reasons for this were old grudges and resentment at the support lent to the revolutionaries which resulted in the internal troubles of 1938-39. He showed his hand by his failure to act vigorously in a number of ways, but I think it is safe to say that his attitude has changed, and that he will now do what he can to help, provided it does not touch his pocket. The very evident signs of nervousness which he used to display at some calamity in Europe no longer recur, and he has steadied down to the prospect that he must either sink or swim with us. I don't think that his attitude can be estimated higher than that, but he is cheerful and fully aware of the amount of the anti British Subah feeling in the town. I think this sums up the attitude of the remainder of the Subah family, including the Abdulla Salim faction.

3. *The Sunni Arab Merchants.*—Some people say that 75 per cent. of these merchants look upon British activities with disfavour, but this is an exaggeration, 50 per cent. is nearer the mark. There is only one real justification for their attitude, and that is the inefficiency of the Subah administration, which is supported by us. They add to this the British attitude in Palestine and also our action, as they believe it to have been, in committing a *volte face* over the [illegible] admired for his methods, for some of the merchants are not over-scrupulous themselves. The ringleaders of this party are about six in number, and they openly [illegible] form an influential party and are virtually the party which seized power in 1938. During that time they showed no respect for established institutions.

4. *The Shiahs.*—This section of the Koweit community forms more than half of the total population and is composed of merchants of Persian, Bahreini and Iraqi extraction, and also of the labouring classes. On the whole they are well disposed to the present régime, but, despite their numbers, unfortunately have not the influence of the Sunnis.

5. This brief summary discloses the state of affairs, and it will be seen that there is only one just cause for ill feeling towards us, and that is the weakness of the Subah administration. I have received many hints, and open requests from some merchants, for the appointment of an adviser, and such an appointment is the only way to remove this ill-feeling. I have mentioned this

question of an adviser elsewhere, and need say no more here, except to add that our prestige and influence must be carefully guarded, if necessary, by the expenditure of money. When His Highness had signed the Koweit Sulphur Agreement and was subsiding into the sofa, I, who was signing, heard him sigh quietly to himself "Thank God an American company at last." This serves to illustrate that British prestige is declining.

Yours sincerely,
A. C. GALLOWAY

E 2523 154 25] No. 99

Mr. Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received August 27.)

(No. 200.)

(Telegraphic.) *Jedda, August 25, 1940.*

IBN SAUD states that he is receiving enquiries from Moslems throughout the world as to the steps he, as guardian of the Holy Places of Islam, is taking to facilitate pilgrimage this year. He is placed by these enquiries in an awkward position, and though he does not wish to be constantly bothering His Majesty's Government he feels obliged to urge that every endeavour be made to arrange safe transport for pilgrims during the coming season. He asks for His Majesty's Government's views on the possibility of organising a pilgrimage from the various countries concerned.

[illegible] ur Lordship, but that I knew that [illegible] was already receiving the attention of His [illegible] action as circumstances permitted would, I was [illegible] be taken.

(Repeated to Government of India, No. 52; Governor of Nigeria, Governor of Singapore, unnumbered, and to Cairo, Bagdad, Jerusalem, Khartum, Saving, by bag.)

E 2523 154 25] No. 100

Viscount Halifax to Mr. Stonehewer Bird (Jedda).

No. 147.

[illegible] *Foreign Office, September 4, 1940.*

[illegible] gram No. 200 of 25th August. Arrangements for pilgrimage [illegible] Ibn Saud that His Majesty's Government are in consultation [illegible] and hope to be able to arrange sufficient number of sailings [illegible]

2. Further particulars will be telegraphed to you as soon as arrangements [illegible]

E 2591 227 25] No. 101

Mr. Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received September 4.)

No. 208.

(Telegraphic.) *Jedda, September 3, 1940.*

YOUR despatch No. 91. Koweit Agreements.

Amir Feisal has informed me that Yusuf Yasin is unlikely to be returning to Saudi Arabia for some time. He consequently asks whether there is any [illegible] the postponement of signature of Koweit Agreements. I said that I [illegible] must seek confirmation.

Meanwhile, I am supplying the Amir at his request with a copy of the [illegible] reference.

(Repeated to Bushire, No. 23.)

(E 1605 143 25) No. 102

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received September 4.)

No. 515
[illegible]

Bagdad, September 3, 1940

FOLLOWING addressed to Shiraz, telegram No. 23 —

"Your telegram No. T 343.

"Adviser to the Interior informs that the present plan is to begin at the Koweit end of the frontier, but he does not think commission likely to start work before the end of September."

(Repeated to Jerusalem No. 61, and Foreign Office.)

E 2580 166 25) No. 103

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received September 6.)

(No. 449.)

HIS Majesty's Ambassador at Bagdad presents his compliments to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and, with reference to [illegible] transmit to him a copy of a note of the 23rd September, 1940, to the Iraqi Ministry for Foreign Affairs respecting the Saudi-Iraqi frontier.

Bagdad, September 23, 1940.

Enclosure in No. 103

Note verbale

His Majesty's Embassy [illegible] Ministry for Foreign Affairs and has the honour to inform the Ministry that their *note verbale* of the 8th July has been referred to His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, who have taken note of the intention of the Iraqi and Saudi Arabian Governments to demarcate their common frontier and to fix its eastern and western terminal points by means of a joint commission under an Egyptian president.

2. His Majesty's Government regard this as a very satisfactory way of settling any difficulties which may have arisen between the two Governments over this frontier. Since, however, the work of the commission will cover the fixing [illegible] questions affecting Transjordan and Koweit will thereby be involved, a decision by the president which ran contrary to the views of His Majesty's Government might lead to the necessity of further negotiations between the two parties and His Majesty's Government. When, therefore, the positions of the two terminal points come to be discussed His Majesty's Government will gladly explain to the two parties and to the Egyptian president their views as to the proper positions of these two points.

3. This can probably best be done upon the ground and if they are given adequate notice they will do their best to send representatives to explain their views to the commission when it reaches the neighbourhood of the two extremities of the frontier.

His Majesty's Embassy avails itself of this opportunity to renew the expression of its highest consideration.

Bagdad, September 23, 1940.

E 2523 154 25) No. 104

Mr. Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received September 9.)

(No. 210.)
(Telegraphic.) *Jedda, September 8, 1940.*

FOREIGN Office telegram No. 141.

In the course of conversation with Amir Feisal about pilgrim prospects, I suggested that Saudi Government should [? group omitted] consider the possibility of reducing the heavy dues at present payable.

2. Minister for Foreign Affairs has now sent me message to the effect that the authorities are studying the question of dues and to help their calculations will be grateful if they may be informed as early as possible of the approximate number of pilgrim ships and pilgrims likely to sail from India. Amir also asks whether shipping companies will offer reduced rates as an encouragement.

3. I have replied that I think that it may be impossible to give the information asked for so long in advance. I also informed Kaimakam that in my opinion reduction in dues should not be made dependent on number of Moslems who have decided to make the journey, but should be effected and announced immediately as an inducement to those who are hesitant.

(Repeated to Foreign, Simla, New Delhi, No. 55.)

E 2411 166 25) No. 105

Viscount Halifax to Sir B. Newton (Bagdad).

No. 232
[illegible]

Foreign Office, September 18, 1940.

IN your despatch of the 27th June your Excellency dealt with the proposed demarcation of the Saudi Iraqi frontier by a joint commission under an Egyptian president, and in your despatch of the 12th July you enclosed a copy of a note from the Iraqi Ministry for Foreign Affairs enquiring whether His Majesty's Government would agree that the problem of fixing the point of intersection of latitude 32° north with longitude 39° east should be referred to the Egyptian president of the commission for a decision "in the light of" treaties in force."

2. So far as the meeting point of Saudi, Iraqi and Transjordan territory is concerned, the question at issue is not to fix the point of intersection of latitude 32° north and longitude 39° east, but to find the correct position [illegible] tion point of the Saudi Iraqi frontier. This lies, in the view of His Majesty's Government, at the summit of the Jebel Anaza, as has been explained to the Iraqi Government by your Excellency, and to the members of the Saudi Arabian and Iraqi frontier survey parties by Mr. Le Ray when he met them near the Jebel [illegible]. Whatever answer is eventually given to the Iraqi enquiry it should be so worded as to avoid any acceptance of the view that the problem is to find a particular point of intersection.

3. So far as the proposed commission is concerned, His Majesty's Govern- [illegible] action which they may think it desirable to take, whether by a commission or otherwise, to determine the line of their common frontier including its two termination points. Indeed, it would in one sense be difficult for His Majesty's Government to find any valid ground for objection, for, even if they were to disagree with the views of the two parties as to the correct position of one of the termination points, they would have no *locus standi* for questioning this view unless they felt that the result deprived them of territory to which they, or rulers [illegible] case might be, had all the territory to which they thought Transjordan or Koweit [illegible] the expense of Saudi Arabia, or *vice versa*, provided that Saudi Arabia or Iraq, as the case might be, was content. If, on the other hand, they felt that the result, if accepted, would deprive Transjordan or Koweit of territory which was right- [illegible] view to the notice of the State (or it might be both States) which claimed the

territory in question and, if necessary, to enforce their counter-claim by whatever measures appeared appropriate.

4. This is, however, a purely theoretical way of looking at the question, and it is clear that in practice no point forming the meeting point of the territory of three different countries can be settled satisfactorily without the co-operation of all these countries.

5. His Majesty's Government are therefore anxious that no final decision should be taken by Saudi Arabia and Iraq, with or without Egyptian aid, about [illegible] an opportunity of expressing their views. At the same time, they are unwilling to place themselves in the position of being obliged to accept the [illegible]

[illegible] difficulties which may have arisen between the two Governments over this frontier. Since the work of the commission will cover the two termination points, where questions affecting Transjordan and Koweit territory will be involved, a decision by the president which ran contrary to the view of His Majesty's Government might lead to the necessity of further negotiation [illegible] the positions of the two termination points come to be discussed, His Majesty's Government will gladly explain to the two parties and to the [illegible] president their views as to the proper positions of these two points. [illegible] probably best be done upon the ground, and if they are given adequate notice (which under war conditions must be taken to mean several weeks at least) they will do their best to send representatives to explain their views to the commission when it reaches the neighbourhood of these two points.

7. Although His Majesty's Government hope that they will be able by some such procedure as that outlined above to persuade all concerned to accept their view of the proper positions of the two termination points of the Saudi Iraqi frontier, it must be recognised that there is one point in regard to which special caution is needed. In spite of the general principle enunciated in paragraph 4, a particular difficulty confronts His Majesty's Government in claiming to have a voice in the settlement of the western termination point of the Iraqi Saudi frontier. This difficulty consists in the fact that, although the wording of the Hadda Agreement of the 2nd November, 1925, is extremely ambiguous, His Majesty's Government take the view that under its provisions the frontier between Nejd (Saudi Arabia) and Transjordan starts at the termination point of the frontier between Nejd and Iraq laid down in Uqair Protocol No. 1 of [illegible] 2nd December, 1922, and not, if there is any difference between the two, at the [illegible] memorandum of September 1939, and especially Annex B). They take this view both on the merits of the case as a matter of treaty interpretation and because it suits them to do so from the point of view of Transjordan's interests on other parts of the frontier. His Majesty's Government also take the view that there is a difference between the termination point of the frontier between Nejd and Iraq and this point of intersection, and that the termination point should properly be fixed at the summit of the Jebel Anaza. Here, again, they take this view both on the merits of the case as a matter of treaty interpretation and because the acceptance of the "co-ordinates" interpretation for the Uqair [illegible] But, although His Majesty's Government may hold these views, it is, strictly speaking, not for them to say that the Saudi Iraqi frontier should terminate at some particular point if the two parties themselves, as a result of arbitration or [illegible] may have with His Majesty's Government, decide that it should terminate somewhere else.

8. It cannot be said that either Saudi Arabia or Iraq has a frontier agreement with His Majesty's Government which precludes them from placing the termination point of the Saudi Iraqi frontier wherever they think fit. The Anglo-Saudi Agreement merely refers back, as already explained, to the Saudi Iraqi Agreement. The Anglo-Iraqi Agreement about the frontier between Transjordan and Iraq (see the correspondence between the Prime Minister of Iraq and the Chief Minister of the Government of Transjordan of the 31st July and the 10th August, 1932, Print Volume, "Further Correspondence respecting Eastern Affairs," Part XXXI, Chapter V, No. 169) likewise merely states:—

> "The frontier between Iraq and Transjordan starts in the south at the point of junction of the Iraq-Nejd frontier and the Transjordan-Nejd frontier and ends [illegible]"

9. This being so, no claim could, strictly speaking, be made on behalf of Transjordan under the principles enunciated in paragraph 8 even if the decision of the two parties had the effect of depriving Transjordan of territory which she might obtain on some other interpretation. As a matter of fact, Transjordan would on this particular part of the frontier receive more territory if the termination point of the Saudi Iraqi frontier were fixed at, say, the intersection of latitude 32° north and longitude 39° east than if it were fixed at the summit of Jebel Anaza. His Majesty's Government are content, even so, to support the view which places it on the Jebel Anaza, for the reasons explained in the above-mentioned memorandum. But it would be all the more difficult for them on this account to contest a decision which placed the termination point at the intersection of the co-ordinates.

10. There is no need to admit the existence of this difficulty to either the [illegible] as far as possible the use of any line of argument which might lead to the difficulty being disclosed.

11. As regards the tri-junction point on the east, both the Saudi Iraqi frontier and the Koweit Iraqi frontier are said to start at the junction of Wa[illegible] al Aujah with Al Batin (see Uqair Protocol No. 1 of the 2nd December, 1922, and General Nuri-el Said's letter of the 21st July, 1932, to Sir Francis Humphrys). Provided, therefore, that the point of junction is clear on [illegible] ground, there should be no difficulty in fixing the eastern extremity of the frontier.

12. Copies of this despatch are being sent to His Majesty's High Commissioner at Jerusalem and His Majesty's Minister at Jedda.

I am, &c.
HALIFAX

E 2591/227/25 — **No. 106**

Viscount Halifax to Mr. Stonehewer-Bird (Jedda)

(No. 149.)
(Telegraphic.) *En clair.* — *Foreign Office, September 19, 1940*

YOUR telegram No. 206.
No objection.

E 2580/166/25 — **No. 107**

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received September 20.)

(No. 581.)
(Telegraphic.) *En clair.* — *Baghdad, September 19, 1940*

MY telegram No. 515.
Considerable postponement is now probable.
(Repeated to Resident, Shiraz, No. 24, and Saving to Jedda, Jerusalem, and Koweit.)

E 2302 313 91] No. 108

Political Resident in the Persian Gulf to Secretary of State for India.
(Communicated by India Office. Received September 27.)

Bahrein, September 26, 1939

T 282. ADDRESSED to Secretary of State for India, repeated to Government of India, copy to Political Agent, Bahrein.

Political Agent has received following letter from Sheikh of Bahrein:—

"We request you to convey the following message to British Government:—

"For nearly a century and a half the Khalifa Sheikhs of Bahrein have been on terms of friendship with the British Government. Great Britain [illegible] ured its prosperity by guarding trade and [illegible]

Our sympathies in this war which is now being waged against the [illegible] would offer it to the British Government, but we have no army. As a sign o our sympathy, we wish to give £30,000 to the British Government towards the costs of war. We hope that the British Government will accept this gift as a small token of our admiration and esteem."

2. Request that I be authorised to communicate to sheikh cordial thanks of His Majesty's Government for his expression of friendship, which they heartily reciprocate and for his generous gift.

3. Suggest mention in British Broadcasting Corporation English and Arabic, and in Indian broadcasts.

E 2302 313 91] No. 109

Telegram from Secretary of State to Political Resident in the Persian Gulf repeated to Government of India, External Affairs Department. Dated September 29, 1939.

ADDRESSED Political Resident, repeated Government of India. [illegible] receipt most gratefully the sheikh of Bahrein's [illegible] to his message. His letter will be given full publicity here.

E 2720 1194 25] No. 110

Mr. Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received October 4.)

(No. 62. Secret.)

Jedda, July 18, 1940

My Lord,

WITH reference to your Lordship's circular despatch of the 4th November last, I have the honour to transmit the accompanying political review of Saudi Arabia for the year 1939.

As I did not arrive in Jedda until after the expiry of the period under review the report has been prepared by Mr. Trott.

I have, &c.
F. H. W. STONEHEWER BIRD.

Enclosure in No. 110.

Political Review of Events in Saudi Arabia for the Year 1939.

Introductory.

THE dominant personality in Saudi Arabia throughout the year has continued to be the ruler, who has [illegible] towards us, undisturbed by all the intrigues of Palestinian and other extremists. He has constantly sought our advice and as far as can be seen has

taken it. Occasionally we have heard of a Legislative Assembly, a Council of Ministers, and a High Council of State but no one knows the duties of these nebulous bodies. The King has, however, shown that he believes in giving his sons the chance to take responsibility on their own shoulders the Amir Faisal has been allowed to deal with many questions of foreign affairs by himself, and the Amir Saud has been made the titular head of the army under his father the King. The outbreak of war found him in strong support of the Allies: he hated Hitler as a disturber of the peace, and the Soviet régime as a menace to Islam. He had gone so far in his support of His Majesty's Government that a blow to them was a blow to his own pride and honour: it was necessary that His Majesty's Government should win, not only in the joint interests of the two countries, but to vindicate his reputation as a statesman. The fact that he made no open declaration in support of the Allies is explained by his special position *vis-à-vis* Islam: and on the whole it seemed that Ibn Saud's neutrality, coupled with his private sympathy and assistance, and his suppression of propaganda, suited the Allies best. The big questions about the frontiers were allowed to slumber, as was that of the Hejaz railway. Financially, the King's position should have been greatly improved by the new oil concession and a loan of a million dollars by the American concessionnaires: but family extravagance is still so great that the finances of the country so far as can be ascertained in the entire absence of published accounts remain in a chaotic condition. Though the Ikhwan movement and the plans [illegible] picture, the King's control over his vast deserts seems as absolute as it ever was. The two strong men who might possibly seize power if they saw the chance are the Amir Musaid of Hail and Ibn Jiluwi of Hasa. As for the King's personal staff, Fuad Bey Hamza, Hafez Wahba, and Yusuf Yasin have continued to do most of the important work: though the first named has been sent to Paris as the first Saudi Minister there: two other Arabs, the Syrian Bashir Sa'dawy [illegible] King's confidential service. The following novelties are also worth recording [illegible] to export its gold concentrates: the first Saudi Boy Scouts have been paraded: Mr. de Gaury has crossed the country in cars from Koweit to Amman in Trans-Jordan: Mr. Philby's concession for the import of cars has been cancelled: schemes for the development of the water supply at Kharj, near Riyadh, have [illegible] Californian Arabian Standard Oil Company: communications throughout the country by wireless telephone have been started: and the Government has expressed a desire to stabilise the external value of its currency.

Foreign Relations.

Palestine.

After the prolonged and acrimonious discussions of 1939, it is pleasant to [illegible] reassuring the King and justifying his oft repeated advice to other Arabs: "Trust the British and they will do what is right." The Amir Faisal and Fuad Bey Hamza were the Saudi delegates to the London discussions of January and February and March 1939. They remained in London after the close of the formal discussions in order to endeavour to shorten the transition period laid down in the white paper. The King expressed great satisfaction at the assurance that Palestine would never become a Jewish State. The immigration clauses of the white paper were not so enthusiastically received, because both His Majesty and the Amir Faisal expressed fear lest Jewish influence in Parliament should prove strong enough to make His Majesty's Government revise them. There is no doubt, however, that the King appreciated the advantages which the white paper conferred on the Arabs. He expressed the view that, given proper guarantees, an understanding with the Palestinian Arabs should now be possible. For the remainder of the year the King's efforts, in regard to Palestine, were largely connected with arrangements for a new start in that country. He first asked whether His Majesty's Government would like him to influence the Palestine Arabs to agree to a truce for one year. This having been coldly received, the King turned to thoughts of an armistice, which, he said

just after the outbreak of war in September, he knew the Mufti would not reject. Various other moves in the direction of an amnesty or an armistice were made by or through the King and His Majesty's Government, strengthened by the great improvement in internal order in Palestine and by the attitude of Iraq and Egypt in support of the Allies, informed His Majesty that, while they would of course welcome any steps which the Arab States might spontaneously take towards improving the situation they were not proposing to ask the Arab States to do so. The British announcement of the 5th December concerning refugees and the conditions under which they could return to Palestine was not unpleasing to the King, though he remarked that a complete amnesty would have been better. His Majesty, like the Iraq authorities, no doubt feels it a strain to have to accommodate some of the refugees, who much prefer to remain his guests than to answer for their misdeeds in Palestine. The only other sidelight on Palestine reported in 1939 was the King's statement that he would not accommodate the Mufti at any price.

Iraq.

[illegible] attacking the Sheikh of Koweit and demanding the annexation of Koweit by Iraq caused great annoyance to Ibn Saud. He brought the broadcasts to our notice saying that he might have done the same much more effectively, but that the reason he had not was partly because of his friendship with the sheikh but [illegible] to receive an assurance that the propaganda (which appears to have emanated from the ill-fated King Ghazi and his advisers) was not approved by His Majesty's Government, who had energetically protested against it to the Iraq Government. [illegible] visited Riyadh, arriving at the end of June, and succeeded in discussing, with [illegible] of opinion arose concerning the proper interpretation of the Uqair Protocol concerning the Saudi-Iraq frontier at Muqur, and fresh irritation was caused when it became known that the Iraqi Chamber had ratified only one of the three agreements signed in May 1938 (the Neutral Zone Agreement) the other two, concerning grazing and water rights, and tribal nationality, were not acceptable. Seyyid Jamil al-Rawi, an ex-Minister of State, was appointed Iraqi Chargé d'Affaires at Jedda in October but his well-known previous service with the Hashimites was a handicap to his efforts to improve relations. The King complained bitterly that Iraq tribesmen continued to loot his camels with impunity, and declared that he imagined that the Iraqis were trying to goad him into attacking them.

Trans-Jordan.

Fewer complaints about violations of the frontier were received in 1939 than in previous years, a fact which indicates that the new frontier inspector, Al Sudeiri, was sensible enough to settle incidents by direct discussion with his opposite number. Nor was anything further heard about the desire of the Saudis to have a representative in Amman. Certain complaints of bad treatment of Saudi merchants during the Palestine troubles were referred to the Palestine authorities. The King's personal feelings about the Hashimite ruler of Trans-Jordan were not improved by the interception of certain letters which had passed between the Amir Abdullah and Sheikh Kamil-ul-Qassab, in which the Amir criticised the Saudi monarch's policy in regard to the Hejaz. At about the same

time (August) a large number of printed circulars, posted at Bludan in Syria, [illegible] and throw off the yoke of their present oppressors." No evidence to connect the Amir with the Bludan circulars was forthcoming, but he owned up to writing the letter. His Majesty's Government informed Ibn Saud that they knew of no grounds on which the Amir Abdullah could suppose that he was about to be chosen for the throne of Syria.

The Yemen.

The King has made it quite clear that the less he had to do with the affairs of the Yemen the better he would be pleased. His chief concern has been Italian intrigue in that country; his fears on that point were revived by the Amir Saif-al-Islam Husein's flight from Cairo to the Yemen in an Italian aeroplane. In reply to the King's enquiry as to the British attitude, he was reminded of the Anglo-Italian Agreement. When the French Minister, M. Ballereau, visited Sana'a in August in order to present his credentials and to make a declaration concerning Sheikh Said, the Imam and his advisers complained to him of the unyielding British attitude about frontier questions, and left the minister with the impression that to the Imam the British were the villains of the piece, although the Italian bribes had not had much influence on the Imam's mind. Little was heard during the year about the water dispute at Haradh.

Bahrein and the Persian Gulf Rulers.

The King visited Bahrein in May after opening the Hasa pipe-line, and stayed a few days. In reply to a suggestion, emanating from Fuad Bey Hamza, [illegible] the Persian Gulf Sheikhs, His Majesty's Minister was able to assure the King that we were continuing to refrain from interference in their internal affairs, while upholding their external authority. The dispute concerning the Island of Lahaina (otherwise Bain) and some neighbouring reefs continued, with no final settlement.

Koweit.

Considerable progress was made with the three draft agreements between Saudi Arabia and Koweit, concerning Trade, "Ibn Voinmage," and Extradition. Sheikh Ahmed of Koweit visited Riyadh in December and was royally entertained. Arrangements concerning the despatch and receipt of Saudi mails via Koweit were discussed in consultation with Iraq and India.

France and Syria.

The first Saudi representative to be accredited to France, Fuad Bey Hamza, presented his letters on the 4th November. The Syrian doctors did their best to stir up anti-French feeling, and the French Minister felt that the Syrian authorities showed little appreciation of the desirability of conciliating Saudi opinion. In M. Ballereau's view there would be trouble if either a Hashimite were to be placed on the throne of Syria or the Turks were to encroach on that country. Ibn Saud offered to mediate between the French and the Syrians, and must have been flattered when the French High Commissioner sounded Fuad Bey [illegible] to have been no more than a vague proposal. When His Majesty's Government expressed their views that the French had not made up their minds in any sense [illegible] the Arab world. As long as no Hashimite ruled Syria, let the Syrians choose for themselves whether to remain under a mandate, or have a republic, or a king from outside.

Italy.

Identic notes were sent to the British and to the Italian Legations in Jedda early in the year setting out the Saudi point of view that the Anglo-Italian Agreement was not to be regarded as binding on the Saudi Arabian Government.

The summary dismissal of the Italian air mission in March, and the refusal to allow the Italian doctor to open a small hospital with beds, were symptoms of an anti-Italian feeling which was intensified by the occupation of Albania. Arms and ammunition to the value of £85,000 were purchased from the Italians on [illegible] November. On the whole the Italians [illegible] B[illegible] of the war, and [illegible]

Germany

Dr. Grobba, the accredited representative of Germany to Iraq and Saudi Arabia, paid his first visit to this country in January and February. He gave out that he was interested solely in trade, though he evidently included the supply of arms and ammunition in that category, and it appears later in the year that the German Government offered Ibn Saud a free gift of 4,000 rifles and 8,000,000 cartridges. The King expressed his annoyance at tendentious German broadcasts about his policy concerning Palestine in June, and desired the German Minister to stick to the truth if he wished to avoid a Saudi denial. Khalid-el Hud was sent to Germany in May to put through an arms deal, which eventually came to nothing. The Saudi official attitude since the war broke out has been strongly anti-German, though the King feels that neutrality is the best thing in his and our interests. Feeling in the Hejaz, however, seems to be pro-German, as Arabs admire successful bandits. German propaganda such as the report that the B[illegible] were stopping the pilgrimage seems to go down at Mecca with no [illegible] and the thought that Britain is being sorely tried seems to give the Hejazis pleasure.

Turkey

The surrender of Hatay to Turkey in June seemed likely to give rise to some united *démarche* from all Arab countries. The King asked for advice and was told by His Majesty's Government that the Arabs had better make the best of the unavoidable fact, and that the Arabs would be well advised to co-operate with the French in order to realise stable political conditions in Syria.

Egypt

No political incident worthy of remark took place except some obscure developments about the caliphate question. The last thing heard on that subject was a denial by the Egyptian Government that it had proposed to establish an Egyptian caliphate. Prince Mohammad Ali came on pilgrimage, and the scheme for the construction of the Jedda–Mecca road and for water and electricity installations at Mecca took definite shape. These schemes are financed partly from trust funds which have accumulated in Egypt, and are being supervised by Egyptian technicians.

Soviet Russia

Russia has remained without a representative; the doctor who refused to return to his country has turned Moslem, and the few White Russian mechanics remain with the Air Force at Jedda. The King expressed strong views in December about the danger of a Russian attack on Iran and Turkey. He considered that the Arabs, with British help and encouragement, should unite to resist the Russian threat.

United States of America.

Judge Bert Fish, United States Minister in Egypt, was accredited to Saudi Arabia as Minister in June, but had not set foot in this country by the end of the year. The new oil concession granted to the California Arabian Standard Oil Company and coming into force on the 21st July, increased the area at the disposal of that company in Nejd. As a result large areas of Nejd, especially Hasa, are being prospected and opened up by an army of American drillers and technicians, numbering more than 300.

Japan.

The Japanese Minister in Cairo, M. Masayuki Yokoyama, arrived with a [illegible] during which he visited Riyadh and discussed proposals for a treaty of friendship and commerce. He made certain offers for [illegible] unpossible. The Saudi Government refused the Minister's suggestion that they should sign the Anti-Comintern Pact on the grounds that communism was not a danger in this country.

China

As a counterblast to the Japanese, the Chinese announced their intention of opening a consulate at Jedda in the near future, but the consul was still on his way at the end of the year.

Internal Affairs.

Oil.

As oil is inseparable from politics in this country, it must be [illegible] continuing their work in the western and the American California Arabian Standard Oil Company in the eastern part of the country. The former have been quite unsuccessful in their search for oil, but the latter, with their new concession of July 1939 giving them an increased area for operations, have struck a rich field. A pipe-line from their field at Dhahran to Ras Tanura was opened in M[illegible] refinery. The royalties payable by the American company [illegible] obtaining an agreement from the Saudi Arabian Government authorising them to open an office at Ras Tanura.

Army and Air Force.

A Turkish trained general named [illegible] was engaged to inspect and train the Saudi regular forces, and a parade of 1,500 men was seen at Taif in November. The Amir Saud was appointed in that month Deputy General Officer Commanding the troops. The plan of training the Saudi army with [illegible] Italians were [illegible] The Air Force was reorganised in November under the command of the successful Saudi pilot Abdullah Mandili, but even he has very little knowledge of technical [illegible]

Pilgrimage.

The pilgrimage of 1939 was well attended, with no epidemics. Pilgrims [illegible] Government put forward an ingenious scheme to remove from their own shoulders the opprobium of these severe monopolistic charges by making shipping companies charge pilgrimage dues at the port of embarkation as part of the fare payable by the pilgrims. As a result of emphatic protests, this proposal was shelved. The Saudi Arabian Government continued their efforts to secure a revision of the 1926 Sanitary Convention, various articles of which they regard as derogatory to their prestige. The Saudi delegates to the meeting at Paris suggested that the legal air space which the shipping companies had to provide should be increased [illegible] but their object was not to better the lot of the poor pilgrim, but to secure that only the richer pilgrims should come on pilgrimage, so that they could spend their money in this country.

Slavery.

Information obtained during the year indicates that the 1936 regulations are a dead letter at any rate as far as the eastern shores of the country are concerned. There is reason to believe that a clandestine trade in child slaves from the shores of Persian and British Baluchistan is still going on.

Outbreak of War.

A minor financial panic took place when war was declared, merchants withdrawing all the gold they could. When it was found that ships arrived from India and Egypt as usual, however, money began to circulate again and confidence revived. The price of gold began to soar, and prices of commodities, including [illegible] gold from the country was forbidden by decree on the 6th October. An attempt to equate the Saudi riyal to the India rupee was not successful. The food position at the end of the year was, however, quite satisfactory, merchants [illegible] taken advantage of a decree lowering import dues by 20 per cent., and also of [illegible] offer by the Government to advance up to 25 per cent. of the value of imports from abroad.

E 2784/154/25] No. 111

Mr. Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received October 16.)

(No. 239.)
(Telegraphic.) *Jedda, October 14, 1940.*

FOLLOWING addressed to Government of India, No. 66; Khartoum, No. [illegible]; Jerusalem, No. 62; and Singapore, unnumbered:—

"Saudi Arabian Government announce that all dues, taxes and fares mentioned in their pilgrimage tariff will be reduced by 25 per cent. this pilgrimage.

"Saudi tariffs are expressed in gold at local gold bars exchange rate, which is now about 25 per cent. above world rates, *e.g.*, local rate for rupees is now about thirty-six to the sovereign, while world rate is about twenty-nine. New announcement, therefore, means at present that Saudi pilgrimage charges are convertible at world rate of exchange of gold."

E 2773/309/91] No. 112

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received October 31.)

No. 471.

HIS [illegible] Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, with reference to Foreign Office telegram No. 381, dated the 9th August, 1940, has the honour to transmit to him a copy of a letter dated the 7th October, 1940, to the Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs respecting the demarcation of frontier between Iraq and Koweit.

Baghdad, October 7, 1940.

Enclosure in No. 112.

Sir B. Newton to the Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Your Excellency, *Baghdad, October 7, 1940.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you that my Government consider it desirable that the frontier between Iraq and Koweit should be demarcated, and I have received instructions to propose to the Iraqi Government that arrangements should be made to do this at an early date. [illegible] should be an exchange of notes providing that the work of demarcating the frontier and erecting pillars should be carried out in a manner similar to that

laid down in the notes exchanged for the same purpose between the Iraqi and Saudi Arabian Governments in February 1938. In order, however, to avoid difficulties which might otherwise arise, His Majesty's Government think it desirable that the proposed notes should include agreement on the interpretation of certain points in the wording of the definition of the frontier as reaffirmed by the Prime Minister in his letter to the High Commissioner No. 2944 of the 21st July, 1932.

In that letter the definition of the frontiers was reaffirmed in the following terms:—

> "From the intersection of the Wadi-al Audja with the Batin and thence northwards along the Batin to a point just south of the latitude of Safwan, thence eastwards passing south of Safwan wells, Jebel Sanam and Um Qasr leaving them to Iraq, and so on to the junction of the Khor Zobair with the Khor Abdullah. The islands of Warba, Bubian, Maskan (or Mash), Fatlakah, Auhah, Kubbar Qaru and Um-el Muradim appertain to Koweit."

4. The points to be interpreted and the interpretation which it is suggested should be given to them are as follows:—

(1) "Along the Batin" the frontier line shall follow the thalweg, [illegible] line of the deepest depression.

(2) The "point just south of the latitude of Safwan" shall [illegible] the thalweg of the Batin due west of the point a little to the [illegible] of Safwan, at which the post and notice board marking the frontier stood until March 1939.

(3) From the Batin to the neighbourhood of Safwan the frontier shall be a line along the parallel of latitude on which stands the above-mentioned point at which the post and notice board formerly stood.

(4) The "junction of the Khor Zubair with the Khor Abdullah" shall mean the junction of the thalweg of the Khor Zubair, with the thalweg of the north westerly arm of the Khor Abdullah known as the Khor Shetana.

(5) From the neighbourhood of Safwan to the junction of the Khor Zubair with the Khor Abdullah the frontier shall be the shortest line between the point defined in sub-paragraph (2) and the point defined in sub-paragraph (4). But if this line shall be found, when followed on the ground, to strike the right bank of the Khor Zubair before it reaches the point defined in sub-paragraph (4), it shall be modified in such a manner as to follow the low water line on the right bank of the Khor Zubair until a point on the bank immediately opposite the point defined in sub-paragraph (4) is reached, thus leaving the whole of the Khor Zubair to Iraq.

(6) From the point defined in sub-paragraph (4) to the open sea, the boundary shall follow the thalweg of the Khor Abdullah.

5. In the hope that your Excellency will agree in principle with my Government's view of the advantage to both the Iraqi and Koweiti Governments of a demarcation of their common frontier, I am enclosing, as a basis for discussion, a draft of a note which I suggest your Excellency should, on behalf of the Iraqi Government, address to me. I will then endeavour to obtain, through the proper channel, the formal agreement of His Highness the Ruler of Koweit, to these proposals.

I have, &c.
BASIL NEWTON.

Sub-Enclosure in No. 112.

Draft of Proposed Note from his Excellency the Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs to the British Ambassador, Baghdad.

Your Excellency,

I HAVE the honour, on behalf of the Iraqi Government, to inform you that they desire, in collaboration with the Koweiti Government, to arrange for the early demarcation of the frontier between Iraq and Koweit, which was reaffirmed

in the Prime Minister's note No. 2944 of the 21st July, 1932 to His Britannic Majesty's High Commissioner for Iraq, and in the reply of His Highness the Ruler of Koweit communicated to the acting Prime Minister with the acting High Commissioner's letter No. 120 of the 22nd August, 1932.

2. In the exchange of notes referred to above the frontier was defined as follows —

"From the intersection of the Wadi al Audja with the Batin and thence northwards along the Batin to a point just south of the latitude of Safwan. Thence eastwards passing south of Safwan wells, Jebel Sanam and Um Qasr, leaving them to Iraq, and so on to the junction of the Khor Zobeir with the Khor Abdullah, the islands of Warba, Bubian, Meskan (or Mashjan), Failakab, Auhah, Kubbar, Qaru and Um el Maradin appertain to Koweit."

3. The Iraqi Government propose that for the purpose of the demarcation [illegible] of the frontier line —

(1) "Along the Batin" the frontier line shall follow the thalweg, *i.e.*, the line of the deepest depression.

(2) The "point just south of the latitude of Safwan" shall be the point on the thalweg of the Batin due west of the point a little to the south of Safwan at which the post and notice-board marking the frontier stood until March 1930.

(3) From the Batin to the neighbourhood of Safwan the frontier shall be a line along the parallel of latitude on which stands the above-mentioned point at which the post and notice-board formerly stood.

(4) The "junction of the Khor Zubair with the Khor Abdullah" shall mean the junction of the thalweg of the Khor Zubair with the thalweg of the north westerly arm of the Khor Abdullah known as the Khor Shetana.

(5) From the neighbourhood of Safwan to the junction of the Khor Zubair with the Khor Abdullah, the frontier shall be the shortest line between the point defined in sub-paragraph (2) and the point defined in sub-paragraph (4). But if this line shall be found, when followed on the ground, to strike the right bank of the Khor Zubair before it reaches the point defined in sub-paragraph (4), it shall be modified in such a manner as to follow the low water line on the right bank of the Khor Zubair until a point on the bank immediately opposite the point defined in sub-paragraph (4) is reached, thus leaving the whole of the Khor Zubair to Iraq.

(6) From the point defined in sub-paragraph (4) to the open sea the boundary shall follow the thalweg of the Khor Abdullah.

4. The Iraqi Government further propose that the operation of demarcation shall be carried out in the following manner —

(1) A joint technical commission shall be set up to —

(*a*) Complete where defective a network of triangulation along the frontier zone from the intersection of the Wadi al Audja with the Batin to the western extremity of the land frontier.

(*b*) Erect frontier pillars which shall be visible from one another the whole length of the land frontier and to mark by buoys or other means which may be agreed upon that part of the boundary which follows the thalweg of the Khor Zubair, the Khor Shetana and the Khor Abdullah down to the sea.

(2) For the purpose of (*a*) and (*b*) above, the frontier shall be deemed to be [illegible] Prime Minister's note to the High Commission No. 2944 of the 21st July, 1932, as interpreted in paragraph 3 above.

(3) The frontier pillars shall be iron stakes 5 inches by [illegible] 11 feet length. On the upper extremity an iron disque 1 foot in diameter shall be fixed in a perpendicular position bearing in relief the number of the pillar.

(4) The pillars shall be numbered consecutively beginning with the first pillar which shall be placed the point where the Joint Commission begins its work.

(5) The Joint Commission shall consist of a first representative and a second representative with the necessary technical and other assistants nominated by each Government. It shall be permissible, in case of necessity, for the second representative to replace and enjoy the same privileges as the first representative. The first representative of each country shall preside alternatively over the work of the commission.

(6) In case of differences between the representatives, they shall submit the question in dispute to their Governments with a view to a solution being reached through the diplomatic channel.

(7) The *proces-verbaux* of the commission shall be prepared in Arabic and English, and, in case of difference, the English text shall prevail.

(8) The date on which the Joint Commission shall begin work shall be fixed by agreement between the two Governments.

(9) The cost of the work of triangulation and the erection of the frontier pillars shall be defrayed in equal shares by each of the two Governments.

5. If the above proposals are agreeable to the Koweiti Government, the [illegible] identic terms shall be regarded as constituting an agreement between the two Governments in this matter.

E 3084/227/25] No. 113

Mr Stonehewer-Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received December 2.)

(No. 277.)
(Telegraphic.) *Jeddah, December 1, 1940.*

YOUR despatch No. 91.

I have had long discussions with Yusuf Yasin, regarding modifications of the drafts of Koweit agreements.

1. *Trade Agreement.*

(*a*) King wishes agreement to be for five years. I told Yusuf Yasin that I must refer this point.

(*b*) Exchange of letters between Hafiz Wahba and Political Agent at Koweit [illegible] "or for any other purpose not specified in this article." I have agreed, subject to your observations, to insert them.

2. *"Bon-Voisinage" Agreement.*

(*a*) Yusuf Yasin considers that reference to the schedule could more [illegible] subject [illegible]

(*b*) Article 6 (2).—Arab version of second sentence agreed upon. Yusuf Yasin [illegible] "If they are not nationals of country which they have entered." I could not agree to this, but suggested that insertion of words "or of a third Arab State" after word "country," thus bringing article into line with article [11] of Extradition Agreement. After [illegible] Yusuf Yasin agreed [illegible]

(*c*) Notes regarding tribal allegiance. Yusuf Yasin pressed strongly for wording agreed upon between Hafiz Wahba and Political Agent. Ibn Saud would never accept wording of redraft. Intention was not, as Treaty Department thought (please see department's note accompanying despatch under [illegible] Koweit tribes. All tribes are Najdi, but elements of these tribes, known collectively as Araibdar, are settled in Koweit, and [illegible] and the political agent for him recognise the position [illegible] was reached [illegible]

I appreciated the King's point of view but said that I must refer question Meanwhile Yusuf Yasin agrees to insertion of word Arabiar under heading tribes of Koweit in accordance with political agent's suggestion to me I trust that in view of Ibn Saud's strong feeling, original draft may be accepted

3 *Extradition Agreement*

Yusuf Yasin accepted stamping and sealing of documents, but held out very strongly for retention of original draft of the second of the exchange of letters agreed upon by Hafiz Wahba and Major Galloway Discussions of this point are continuing and I will telegraph result

4 *Language*

I told Yusuf Yasin that you insisted on an English text for publication as a white paper He countered by citing Bahra Agreement, where translation was [illegible] two texts, the Arab prevailing in case of dispute He made the point made in paragraph 17 of Sir Gilbert Clayton's report of 25th November, 1925 (Middle East, No 7 of 7th February, 1926), that agreement will be implemented by two Arab speaking States. I promised to lay his views before you in the hope that one or other of his suggestions would be acceptable I think that the question of *amour propre*, as well as that of expediency, is involved in Ibn Saud's desire for assent to Arab text

(Repeated Persian Gulf, No 34, for Koweit)

E 3034 327 25] No. 114

Mr Stonehewer-Bird to Viscount Halifax —(Received December 3.)

No 278)
Telegraphic)

Jedda, December 2, 1940

MY telegram No 277

Ibn Saud attaches very great importance to maintenance of original wording of second exchange of letters annexed to Extradition Agreement Intention was to say not that provision of Extradition Agreement applies equally to Bedouin [illegible] but only type of crime which a Bedouin ever commits is a crime of violence which cannot be classed [illegible] Ibn Saud's draft following exactly the wording of the exchange of letters annexed to Iraqi-Saudi Arabian Extradition Agreement and to adopt the suggested re-draft would be to accord more favourable treatment to Bedouin of Koweit than to those of Iraq

I pointed out that English text could not be allowed to stand as wording was, whatever the intention, offensive to Bedouin

Yusuf Yasin finally agreed that, if text of letter three remained in form of Saudi draft, he would re draft first and second sentences of letter four in following sense " I agree that offences which Bedouin usually commit fall within those specified in article 3 of Extradition Agreement, and that it would be incorrect to describe such offences as political "

I should be grateful for your early instructions.

(Repeated to President, Persian Gulf, No. 35, Prokuwaw)

[E 2773 309 91] No. 115

Sir B Newton to Viscount Halifax (Received December 26)

No 547

My Lord,

Baghdad, November 29, 1940

WITH reference to my despatch No. 471 of the 7th October, I have the honour to transmit to [illegible] copies of the reply that I have received to my letter to the Minister for Foreign Affairs informing him that His Majesty's Government [illegible] desirable that the frontier between Koweit and Iraq should be demarcated

2 The suggestion made in this reply that the demilitation of the Koweit Iraq frontier should be postponed because of the delays that are occurring in fixing the Saudi-Iraqi frontier seems to be merely a pretext. The Iraqi Government have probably taken a leaf out of the Iranian book and hope by delaying demarcation to be able to jump a claim or two (in the style of their recent removal of the frontier post at Safwan), and perhaps even to acquire the islands of Warbah and Bubian. Before I received the Iraqi reply, Mr Edmonds had already made it known to me that the Ministry of Defence, when asked for their views on His Majesty's Government's proposals, had deprecated the demarcation of the frontier until what they called " the question of the cession to Iraq of the islands of Warbah and Bubian " had been settled

3 Your Lordship will recall that the Iraqis at one time had the idea that these two islands might be given to them for nothing in order that they should have complete control over the approaches to the projected port at Um Qasr

4. Nevertheless, I myself feel some doubt whether the present is really a convenient time for this frontier to be demarcated. If, however, the demarcation [illegible] boundary post at Safwan, either by having it replaced or at least by having its exact position placed on indisputable record

5. Apart from this consideration, now that, in the absence of British help, the Iraqi Government have apparently shelved for the time being the Um Qasr port scheme, I am not sure that delay is necessarily to our ultimate disadvantage, or likely to prejudice the attainment of such local objectives as we may have at an eventual peace settlement. I hope that the importance of Koweit will grow in the near future, seeing that it may eventually prove to be a key-point not only on the route to Bagdad and beyond but also on any air or land route which may be developed between Transjordan and the Persian Gulf Koweit, moreover, seems to be rich in oil, and Koweiti waters probably contain on the Khor Abdullah the best potential port on the Arabian side of the Gulf

6. On the other hand, if your Lordship considers it desirable that the Iraqi Government should be pressed to agree to demarcation now, I can return to the charge.

7 I think, however that, in the circumstances explained above, the need for avoiding disputes in connexion with the development of the new port on the Khor Abdullah would not be a persuasive argument and that it would probably be better to take the line that in the general interests of good neighbourly relations it is desirable to demarcate a frontier that has remained unmarked on the ground for so long I could refer to the recent affair of the boundary post at Safwan (my despatch No. 363 of the 3rd August) as an illustration of the misunderstandings that arise between neighbours when frontiers are not clearly marked and also without now, I think, risking offence to Iraqi susceptibilities to the allegations that each country has made from time to time that officials or tribesmen from the other have trespassed on the wrong side of the border

8. I am sending copies of this despatch to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf at Bushire, the Government of India and His Majesty's Ambassador at Cairo

I have, &c
BASIL NEWTON

Enclosure in No. 115

Ministry for Foreign Affairs to His Majesty's Embassy, Baghdad

THE Ministry for Foreign Affairs present their compliments to His Britannic Majesty's Embassy, Baghdad and, with reference to the Embassy's note No 487 of the 7th October, 1940, have the honour to state that they take the suggestion contained in the Embassy's note as having been inspired by the discussion of the Iraqi-Saudi frontier question. As this question has been put off for the present, the Ministry believe that the Embassy will share with them the view that it is convenient to put off discussion of the question raised in the Embassy's note

Baghdad, November 21, 1940

E 3108 3108 25] No. 116

Mr Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received December 29)

No 311
(Telegraphic.) *Jedda December, 28. 1940*

FOLLOWING is a repetition of my telegram No 8, Saving to Foreign Office, repeated to Bagdad

Official account is now publishd in Saudi press of a plot against the Saudi Government by certain Sharifs of the family of Al Aun which has been the subject of police investigations for the past few weeks. Following is outline of the affair

The income from certain wakfs of the Aun in Hejaz is disputed among [illegible] were in charge of a certain Hassan Kutbikais, agent of the family With his connivance, his assistant El Abid Ibn Hussein El Dhib stole the funds and distributed them amongst various Sharifs in and about Ereef with the object of setting on foot a conspiracy to wrest the Hejaz from Ibn Saud and set up a Sharifian ruler The principal conspirators were three brothers of the Aun family Abdul Hamid, Ali and Hassan Five other Sharifs entered into the plot, but three of these informed against the rest and all the conspirators were arrested El Abid Ibn Hussein El Dhib and Abdul Hamid were condemned to death [illegible] Abdul Hamid's sentence was commuted to imprisonment. El Abid Ibn Hussein [illegible]

Rumour went that Ibn Saud spared the life of Abdul Hamid to avoid offence to Romanoffs in Iraq. The general opinion is that the plot was ill-conceived and had no hope of success One informant stated that the funds which were to finance the revolt amounted only to 300 sovereigns

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 101 (for Middle East Intelligence Centre, No. 47), Bagdad, No. 73 Jerusalem, No. 80 Bahrein No. 13, and Bushire, No. 30)

CHAPTER II.—IRAQ.

E 220 220 93] No. 117

Sir H Knatchbull-Hugessen to Viscount Halifax—(Received January 16)

(No. 52.)
(Telegraphic.) *Angora, January 15. 1940*

MY telegram No. 850.

I asked the Minister for Foreign Affairs whether he had any more to tell me [illegible] Nuri's overtures

2 He said that he had telegraphed to the Turkish Minister at Bagdad approving the latter's language He had also said that if General Nuri wishes to come to Angora, he could do so, but that nothing in the nature of an official invitation was to be issued

3. Since then he had heard no more

Repeated to Bagdad Tehran and Cairo)

E 353/220/93] No 118

Sir H Knatchbull-Hugessen to Viscount Halifax —(Received January 25)

(No 1 Saving)
(Telegraphic) *En clair* *Angora, January 20, 1940*

MY telegram No 52

Iraqi Minister informs me that he has instructions to propose to Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs that General Nuri and Iraqi Minister for Foreign [illegible]

2 I understand from him that the idea is to have a general conversation and not necessarily to discuss General Nuri's schemes reported in my telegram No. 850 of 23rd December

(Not repeated)

E 246 47 93] No 119

Viscount Halifax to Sir B Newton (Bagdad)

[By Bag]

No 10. Saving)
[illegible] *En clair* *Foreign Office, January 30, 1940*

QUESTION of supply of war material to Iraq has been very carefully considered by His Majesty's Government [illegible] Government would [illegible] with the [illegible] to have [illegible] treaty [illegible] Assistance [illegible] not at least [illegible] made on their [illegible] [illegible] Turkey

2 I have [illegible] Iraqi Government may fear attack before very long from [illegible] that if His Majesty's Government say [illegible] [illegible] that Iraq is to be a base of [illegible] war [illegible] time for [illegible] There are however [illegible] with the situation if Iraq were to be attacked [illegible] war material [illegible] have to be supplied for use [illegible] more practical [illegible] this material to British troops who are to get to there

3. His Majesty's Government are therefore unable at present to deliver any war material to Iraq except in certain minor instances which are being reported to Iraqi Government individually through Military Mission, and although they will do their best to meet Iraqi requirements when possible, they cannot at this stage of the war and in view of the general uncertainty of the situation, make any promises with regard to future delivery dates.

4. Unpalatable though this news may be your Excellency may think it best to explain the position frankly to the Iraqi Government. Line which I suggest might be taken for such explanation is contained in my immediately following telegram. I should be grateful for your observations.

E 246 47 93] No. 120

Viscount Halifax to Sir B. Newton (Baghdad).

[By Bag.]

(No. 11. Saving.)
(Telegraphic.) *En clair.* *Foreign Office, January 30, 1940.*

MY immediately preceding telegram [of 30th January]. Supply of war material to Iraq.

Following is suggestion for line to be taken in discussion with Iraqi Government:—

As the Iraqi Government know, and as has recently been demonstrated by the grant to them of substantial credits for this purpose, His Majesty's Government are most anxious to help in strengthening the armed forces of Iraq at this time. The Iraqi Government may have heard accounts of the great progress which is being made in the United Kingdom to expand and accelerate the supply of war materials of all kinds. If they have done so, this fact will, His Majesty's Government fear, add to the disappointment which the Iraqi Government are likely to feel when they learn that, speaking generally, His Majesty's Government cannot at present make any deliveries of war material (except in certain minor [illegible] general and the Military Mission), and that, although His Majesty's Government will do their best to meet the requirements of the Iraqi Government as soon as it is possible for them to do so, they cannot at this stage of the war, and in view of the general uncertainty of the situation, make any promises with regard to future delivery dates.

2. The reason for this state of affairs is that as the manufacturing resources of the United Kingdom, though very great, are not unlimited, His Majesty's Government must restrict the available supplies to those countries which are already engaged in warlike operations, or which are likely to be so engaged in [illegible] of their obligations to Iraq under the alliance, and, in the event of aggression against Iraq, would come immediately to the aid of the Iraqi Government in the [illegible] with some other countries, and His Majesty's Government hope the Iraqi Government [illegible] Government are at present in a position to provide, cannot be more effectively given than to those countries which are nearest the danger zone, or are, in [illegible] already involved. What is more, help of this kind is in reality of the greatest benefit to Iraq, inasmuch as it lessens such risk as there is of any eventual attack upon her.

E 464 53 93] No. 121

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received February 1.)

(No. 23.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, January 31, 1940.*

THE Minister for Foreign Affairs has informed me that the Iranian Minister, on [? instructions], has asked whether the Iraqi Government would allow transit through Iraq of Iranian exports to Germany. (He did not know their nature.)

The Minister for Foreign Affairs proposed to advise the Cabinet to refuse, but wished to consult me first.

I replied that, since Iraq was an Ally of Great Britain and Great Britain was at war with Germany, she should, of course, refuse. I reminded the Minister [illegible] Iraq, namely, that if its absence hindered the Iraqi Government in acting as an Ally His Majesty's Government would expect a declaration to be made.

(Repeated to Tehran, No. 5.)

E 498 458 93] No. 122

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received February 3.)

(No. 24. Confidential.)
My Lord, [illegible] 17, 1940.

IN my despatch No. 717 of the 6th [illegible] strength of the Opposition which [illegible] Said. In the concluding [illegible] peculiar and [illegible] band on the [illegible] various politicians, [illegible] office last time to [illegible] average life of Cabinets in Iraq has been no longer than nine months. But King Faisal, by his authority and his technique, was able to ensure that the changes did not take place by violent methods. With his son matters were otherwise. King Ghazi had neither the authority, personality nor capacity to do what his father had done, and he became, not the controller of political currents, but their instrument. The rival politicians began to have recourse to external factors for furthering their aims. In 1935 the Opposition fomented a revolt among the Euphrates tribes which brought down two successive Cabinets in that year. In 1936 a general staged a *coup d'Etat* with the assistance of the army; in 1937 the army itself eliminated the general and removed his adherents from office. And in 1938 Nuri Said, who had remained outside the Government ever since he had been [illegible] of the 1936 *coup d'Etat*, used the army to [illegible] with as well as without the army will

one day sharpen, even to the point where something very much like civil war may result.

4. In this situation much, clearly, turns upon the actions and personality of the Regent. The Emir Abdul Ilah starts, evidently, with certain disadvantages. [illegible] (as the son of the late King Ali of the Hejaz) a foreigner. But, in another way, his previous detachment from Iraqi political life may be an advantage; he has taken his responsibilities seriously and has a good personality. Whether he will commence, or, indeed, has commenced, to take an active part in influencing Iraqi politics from the particular point of view of sorting out and concentrating the rival political ambitions is not yet clear. Unless he does so it is difficult to see how the problem of effecting changes of government without force can be solved. But if [illegible] do, on some political or military or other faction or influence in order to maintain [illegible] turn for advice or assistance may well be, in view of Britain's past association with Iraq, His Majesty's Embassy.

5. The extent to which, in such a contingency, the embassy should support or advise the Regent, and, generally speaking, intervene in the internal political life of Iraq, is clearly a question which cannot be answered at present, if only because it envisages a hypothetical situation, and it is not the intention of this despatch to invite your Lordship to come to a decision upon it. My intention is at present merely to present to you possibilities which underly the existing situation in order that we may turn them over in our minds and not be caught altogether unprepared should they, in fact, materialise. It will be necessary, for instance, to consider whether the trend of events is likely ultimately to place His Majesty's Government before the alternative either of intervening in Iraq's internal affairs or of liquidating their position and commitments in Iraq altogether, when British influence would, no doubt, in due course be replaced by that of some other foreign country, perhaps Turkey. If the political developments which I have described earlier in this despatch were to continue, they would raise the question whether, in the long run, Iraq is really capable of governing herself and whether, if British support were removed, she would not descend a vicious spiral into an abyss of internal chaos, when she would become an easy prey to external aggression.

6. Fortunately, the issue is not immediate and may never become so. The [illegible] of common sense in the regulation of their tribal life on [illegible] deterioration at the centre went [illegible] may [illegible]

7. [illegible]

I have [illegible]

BASIL NEWTON

E 500/500/93] No. 123

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received February 5.)

(No. 31.)

My Lord, *Baghdad, January 20, 1940.*

IN accordance with your circular of the 4th November last, I have the honour to submit the following review of the general attitude of Iraq during 1939.—

2. It has been an eventful year. It has seen the Palestine Conference, the death of Iraq's [illegible] King [illegible] war between Britain and

Germany. The Government of Nuri Said, while passing through some difficult [illegible] Iraqi Administrations without having had to broaden its basis or, indeed, make any changes in its structure except minor ones dictated by local considerations. The end of the year found it, while its chief was not over-happy and its members not over-united, yet maintaining its hold over the destinies of the State in the absence of any other political combination capable of taking its place.

3. The first event of the year was the Palestine Conference, at which Iraq was represented by the President of the Council, his place being taken later by [illegible] conference is too well known to need description here. Suffice it to say that agreement between the delegations to the conference proving impracticable, His [illegible] own policy, which they did in the white paper of May. The Iraqi Government, in company with the Governments of Egypt and Saudi Arabia, adopted the attitude that they could not recommend the Palestine Arabs to accept the [illegible] *non possumus* attitude. So far as Iraq is concerned, it would be misleading to say that the Government base their objections on one aspect of the white paper more than on another, since there is no guarantee that, assuming that satisfaction [illegible] would not find further pretexts for complaint. In so far as their attitude is definable at all, it is that they dislike the whole principle of Jewish settlement [illegible] will, carry out in practice the terms of the white paper, and that they are convinced that, as matters at present stand, the Jews will find means of asserting their preponderance in Palestine. There are, of course, various shades of opinion in Iraq as regards Palestine, and the Government, though pan Arab, do not represent the extreme pan Arab element, but they have to take account not only of the use of Palestine as a political counter by the Opposition, but of the [illegible] arrival of the Mufti of Jerusalem in Baghdad on the 16th October from Syria naturally complicated the problem, since, although the Government's assurance to me that he would not be allowed to indulge in political activities seems, in the main, to have been kept, his presence in Iraq has furnished the occasion for numerous pan Arab gatherings and demonstrations, and has stimulated interest in the Palestine question. This question is, in fact, the only serious respect in which the interests of the two States allied by the treaty of 1930 still publicly diverge.

4. The second fateful event for Iraq was the death in a motor accident, on the 4th [illegible] which the crown passed to a small boy of 4, was a great test for the young Kingdom of Iraq, and even now renders the future somewhat uncertain, it cannot be denied that it removed a ruler who was not calculated to lead the country to great heights. King Ghazi was [illegible] well with His Majesty's Government and their representatives, although only a few months before his death his vanity led him into espousing, on his private wireless, the "cause" of certain "Liberal Arab elements" in Koweit who were being "ground down" by a reactionary sheikh behind whom, of course, stood His Majesty's Government. But he had neither the application nor the stability [illegible] Arabs of Iraq. Happily, the appointment as Regent of his cousin, the Emir Abdul Ilah, a more serious member of the Hashimite family, who already shows signs of political capacity, has encouraged the hope that Iraq will traverse the minority of King Faisal II without injury, and perhaps even with profit.

5. The death of King Ghazi was in one respect remarkable, in that it provided a telling illustration of the widespread and unscrupulous nature of German propaganda in Iraq. As relations between Britain and Germany deteriorated, so did German propaganda in the Middle East in general, and in Iraq in particular, become more active. The German Minister in Baghdad, with the assistance of money, a host of agents and broadcasts in Arabic [illegible] wireless, worked unceasingly to spread pro-German, if not pro-Nazi, ideas among public opinion in Iraq, particularly the army, the students and the tribes, and

naturally did not fail to make use of the Palestine question in his efforts to blacken the British name in this country. The Koweiti controversy also came as grist to the German mill, and when, at the height of it, King Ghazi met with his fatal accident, the opportunity which this combination of circumstances offered to the German propagandists was too good to be missed. Within twelve hours of the tragedy rumours were in circulation that the British were responsible for the King's death (Dr. Grobba, indeed, later openly hinted at ways in which they might have caused it) and a fanatical mob had surged into the British Consulate at Mosul and murdered His Majesty's Consul.

6. The Mosul tragedy was a shock to Iraqi opinion. It showed to what extent that opinion had been misled by propaganda and rumour, and it also showed the Government how far public security in Iraq had in consequence deteriorated. General Nuri lost little time in removing from office the Minister of the Interior, Naji Shaukat, who was fanatically nationalist and had refused to take effective steps to prevent the agitation and demonstrations to which the combination of Palestine and German propaganda was constantly giving rise. The Germans, however, did not abate their efforts and, indeed, became increasingly active as the date of the outbreak of war between Britain and Germany approached.

7. The events of the 3rd September, 1939, provided the acid test of the Iraqi attitude towards the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of Alliance of 1930, article 4 of which was now for the first time invoked. On the whole, while the Iraqi Government's attitude might have been better, it might also have been considerably worse. They announced their intention of fulfilling the letter and [illegible] of the treaty. Influenced by the example of Egypt, they did not (as [illegible] they were not bound to do) declare war or a state of war with Germany. Public expression to Iraqi sympathies was, however, given by a telegram addressed to [illegible] the measures (such as breaking off diplomatic and trade relations with Germany, interning German nationals and guarding the essential lines of communication) which they were obliged to take if they were to fulfil the obligations of the treaty. Some members of the Government had clearly not been prepared to go so far as [illegible] so far as possible, Iraq's obligations to the United Kingdom, not only for political [illegible] Palestine but [illegible] the younger officers' inexperience and fear of war, and the consequent disinclination of the army to take any step which might be calculated to involve Iraqis in the fighting.

8. If, however, there has been cause for disappointment with Iraq's initial attitude with regard to her treaty obligations, the same cannot be said of the attitude towards the war of Iraqi public opinion in general. Important factors were the suppression of all German news and the ready help given by the Iraqi Press Department to the publicity work of the embassy. The German attack on Poland produced a revulsion of feeling against Germany, and it was at last clear to all Iraqis that Hitler, so far from standing for the emancipation of small and weak nations from "imperialism" was simply concerned to rivet upon them the yoke of the swastika. While not losing sight of their former conception of the Arabs chafing under the "tutelage" of the great Western democracies, the I[illegible] have recognised quite clearly the definite menace of Hitlerism and are [illegible] to see it defeated, although they hope that Britain and France may find [illegible] at, during or as a result of the war, to accord full independence and self-determination to the Arabs of Palestine and Syria. The Russian onslaught upon Finland has likewise produced a healthy reaction here, although it has [illegible] schemes for reinforcing the security of Iraq and her neighbours by attempts to strengthen the Saadabad Pact or to conclude new pacts.

I have, &c.
BASIL NEWTON

E 676 250 93] No. 124

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received February 15.)

(No. 51.)
My Lord, *Baghdad, February 2, 1940.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 14 of 22nd January, I have the honour to convey to your Lordship the following further information which I have received concerning the murder of the late Sayyid Rustam Haidar.

2. After the fatal attack made on the Minister on 18th January, a number of persons were arrested on evidence contained in statements made by his assailant Husain Fawzi. Most of these men were soon able to clear themselves from suspicion and were released, and by the end of January only three men remained in custody. They were Sabih Najib, Ibrahim Kamil and Arif Ana.

3. The first and second are former Cabinet Ministers who had personal reasons for disliking Rustam Haidar and the third is a former Mutasarrif who has been without employment for some time. The Prime Minister has caused a special committee to be set up to carry out the necessary enquiries. I gather that it consists of three members including a Judge of the Court of Appeal who directs its work and a military officer. The British technical adviser in the Department of Criminal Investigation, Major Wilkins, is attached to the committee as an expert.

4. The Prime Minister stated recently to a member of my staff that there was strong circumstantial evidence that Sabih Najib was an accessory to the crime and that considerable suspicion also attached to Ibrahim Kamil and Arif Ana. He declared his determination to find out the truth, and seemed to be genuinely anxious that the investigation should be thorough and impartial. The Prime Minister is in a trying position. On the one hand there are many who openly suggest that he is using Rustam Haidar's murder as an opportunity to strike at his political opponents and on the other there are not a few among the Shiahs who are already saying that because Rustam Haidar was a Shiah the Prime Minister as a Sunni will try to shield the big men (also Sunnis) who were behind the crime.

5. Whatever course he follows he cannot escape criticism, and I think he would be only too pleased to have someone to share with him the responsibility for the decisions to be taken. His difficulty is to find any one trustworthy and competent enough to bear this burden. The setting up of the special committee which I have mentioned above has the appearance of being an honest attempt to solve this difficulty.

6. I am sending a copy of this despatch to the Combined Middle East Intelligence Centre, Cairo.

I have, &c.
BASIL NEWTON

E 677 144 93] No. 125

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received February 15.)

(No. 52 E.)
My Lord, *Baghdad, February 3, 1940.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 665 E. of the 14th November last regarding the financial position of the port of Basra, I have the honour to transmit, herewith, three copies of the Administration Report of the Port of Basra and the Fao Bar Dredging Scheme for the year ended the 31st March, 1939 (1).

2. Financially the port had another successful year. The actual earnings, amounting to I.D. 444,142, exceeded the budget estimates by I.D. 62,942 and the actual revenue of the year 1937-38 by I.D. 18,292. The actual expenditure was I.D. 365,517 as against I.D. 350,198 in the preceding year. There was a saving

(1) Not printed.

of I D 13 972 on the sanctioned budget vote and an actual surplus of I D 7 8 625 was obtained. Of the latter amount, which is I D 2 873 higher than [illegible] 19[illegible] I 7 [illegible] sferred to the Surplus R[illegible] ng a total of I D 354,853. Of the accumulated surplus funds I D 147 074 was spent on capital works with the Iraqi Government s approval, the air port absorbing I D 129 952 and staff quarters I D 10,278 The General Reserve Account remained unchanged at I D 225,000 but the Investment Account increased from I D 23 000 to I D 34,000 The sixteenth [illegible] lment (I D 18 029) in respect of capital debt redemption was paid to His Majesty's Government, reducing the amount outstanding to I D 252 407

3 The number and the gross registered tonnage of the ships which entered the port during the years 1937 38 and 1938–39 were as follows.

	1937 38		1938 39	
	No.	G R T	No.	G R T
Abadan and Khorramshahr	1 026	6 344 432	948	5 819 360
Basra	269	1,390,982	281	1 348 811
Total	1,295	7,735,414	1 229	7,168,171

4 1,299 466 tons of cargo passed through the port during the year under review as compared with 1 391 917 tons the year before. The former figure comprised 844,464 tons of import cargo and 455,002 tons of export cargo, the corresponding figures for 1937 38 being 807 412 tons and 584 505 tons

5 The results for the current year are unlikely to prove as satisfactory as those for 1938 39 Both imports and exports have declined since the outbreak of war, and although exports may shortly increase owing to an improvement in shipping facilities, it is doubtful whether the ground lost during the past three months will be recovered Furthermore, the German shipping services, which normally account for approximately 15 per cent. of the total shipping entering the port of Basra, have been eliminated and the British shipping services have been curtailed The sailings of Strick Ellerman ships have, I understand been reduced by about 40 per cent and those of British India ships by nearly 20 per cent. The [illegible] tons owing to the suspension of development operations by the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company

6. As regards the Fao Bar Dredging Scheme, the occurrence of heavy floods for the eighth year in succession caused serious shoaling in the dredged channels and on the Karun Bar 4 847 983 cubic yards of soil were carried away and deposited at sea during the year under review but the four dredgers in operation were unable to recover all the ground lost, the actual net loss for the year [illegible] as a standard of comparison, the total shortage thus increased to 702 238 cubic yards In the circumstances the fifth dredger which was ordered in the middle of 1939 is urgently required Despite the dredging difficulties, shipping suffered no delays and the length of the dredged channels was extended by 2 miles to 19 miles

7 Abadan shipping contributed I D 226 592 to the total revenue of I D 240,949 from dredging dues which showed a decrease of I D 36 832 as [illegible] it to I D 402,658 At the close of the year 1938 39 a sum of I D 136 250 was on fixed deposit with the Iraqi Treasury and the Eastern Bank

8 I am sending a copy of this despatch to the Department of Overseas Trade and to His Majesty's Consul at Basra.

I have, &c.
BASIL NEWTON

E 711 448 93] No. 126

Sir B Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received February 17.)

(No 46.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad February 17 1940*

THE Prime Minister has just called to inform me of the following changes in the Iraqi Government, which involve no change in policy Pending an announcement in day or two, he is most anxious to avoid leakage of the secret, at present known only to those most immediately concerned

General Nuri Pasha will be replaced as Prime Minister by Rashid Ali but continues in the Government as Minister for Foreign Affairs. Rashid's present post at court will probably be left vacant for the time being Taha will remain as Minister of Defence and a new appointment made to Ministry of Finance. There will be no change in the Ministry of the Interior

The present Minister for Foreign Affairs, Minister of Communications and Minister of Justice will not be invited to join the new Government, which will include as new members one representative of the Shia, perhaps Rauf Bahrani Director General of Customs, and one representative of Kurd, perhaps Amin Zaki Amin al Umari may also be appointed to one of the vacant offices as a means of removing him from the army. Parliament will probably be dissolved in the early future in order to hold general election on the issue [illegible] Government would be thereby freed from parliamentary difficulties for the period of four months

Comment follows

E 762 448 93] No. 127

Sir B Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received February 19.)

(No. 47.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad February 17 1940*

MY immediately preceding telegram and my despatch No. 717

Rashid Ali is not reputed to be a straightforward man, nor is he widely [illegible] but he is [illegible] and has [illegible] Bahrani will be [illegible] and not very efficient, but Amin Zaki will bring considerable experience and ability to his Ministry, and he [I will be] a more representative Kurdish member of the Cabinet than Jalal Baban, who goes

You will be aware of signs that Nuri Pasha s Cabinet had run its course. It is all to the good that the change should come constitutionally and the sequence of *coups d'Etat* at last be broken. Retention of Nuri Pasha as Minister for Foreign Affairs should ensure that the attitude of the Government towards His Majesty's Government will remain unchanged

Opposition of Madfai and Suwaidi family will, of course, hardly be placated but may be somewhat baffled. Nuri Pasha, who probably is in genuine need of relief from the [illegible] Prime Minister will be able to evade responsibility for the findings at the trial about to be held over the murder of Rustam Haidar (my despatch No 51).

E 676 250 93] No. 128

Viscount Halifax to Sir B Newton (Bagdad)

(No. 32.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office February 19. 1940*

YOUR despatch No. 51 (of the 2nd February) Arrests of Ibrahim Kemal and Said Naji

I [illegible] ce of General Nuri's anxiety that matter shall be investigated [illegible] Nevertheless, arrest of two ex-Ministers in question has [illegible] able anxiety

2. I presume that neither of these men is really likely to have engaged in any kind of murder plot, and, if they had wished to murder anyone, it surely seems most improbable that their choice would have fallen on the late Minister of Finance. In fact, it looks very much as though, in ordering their arrest, Prime Minister may have allowed himself to be swayed to an extent which he may not himself realise by personal animus against them as his political opponents.

3. I certainly do not wish to make difficulties for General Nuri, as he is no doubt, with all his faults, the most friendly of the Iraqi politicians. But this very fact and the further fact that His Majesty's Government are generally supposed in Iraq to support his Government is likely to involve His Majesty's Government in the resentment which would be caused if Nuri is indeed making an opportunity to get rid of some of his rivals.

4. If you think there is force in these considerations, please inform Prime Minister in confidence that I have learnt with concern of the arrest of such distinguished men as the two ex Ministers on so serious a charge, that I applaud [illegible] evidence against them is carefully sifted before deciding whether they should be committed for trial, and that I earnestly trust that, in making arrangements for the trial itself, the Iraqi Government will give the very serious consideration which it deserves to the importance of avoiding even an appearance of political prejudice against the accused.

5. I leave to your discretion question whether it would be desirable to enlist support of Regent in this matter.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 86 (for M.E.I.C.).)

E 768/448/93] No. 129

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received February 20.)

(No. 49.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Baghdad, February 20, 1940.*

MY telegram No. 47.

I am officially informed by Minister for Foreign Affairs that on 18th February Prime Minister tendered resignation, which was accepted by the Regent on the following day. Old Government has been asked to carry on pending new one. Above is not confidential.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 10 (for Middle East Intelligence Centre).)

E 778/448/93] No. 130

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received February 21.)

(No. 50.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, February 20, 1940.*

MY immediately preceding telegram and my No. 46.

Rashid Ali, whom I saw yesterday, does not seem to have his new Cabinet as ready as has been anticipated by General Nuri Pascha and told me that its composition could not be announced before 21st February, if then. He explained [illegible] to include Naji Suwaidi, in which case Taufiq might go as Minister to London. Jamil Madfai would, however, not join so long as Nuri Pascha remained, as seems to be Rashid Ali's definite intention. Rashid Ali expected Taha to remain, but did not seem quite certain whether it would be at the Ministry of Defence.

He assured me that there would be no change of policy, and I expressed the hope that the delay in announcing new Government would be as short as possible.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 11 (for Middle East Intelligence Centre).)

E 779/448/93] No. 131

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received February 21.)

(No. 52.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, February 21, 1940.*

MY telegram No. 50.

Yesterday Hussein Fauzi and Amin-al Umari informed Rashid Ali and later the Regent that the army would not tolerate a Cabinet in which Taha [illegible] Nuri Pasha was included. The Regent thereupon informed both officers that [illegible] had been placed on [illegible]

Rashid Ali, however, who had already met with [group undecypherable] difficulties, gave up the attempt to form a Government.

This morning the Regent has been in consultation with the Presidents of the Chamber and the Senate and the ex Prime Minister about the formation of the new Government.

Wild [group omitted] rumours] are in circulation, but the facts appear to be as related above. Nuri Pasha's Cabinet is still carrying on and there have been no disorders.

I have not been able to see Nuri Pasha, but I am visiting the Regent at 4 p.m.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 14 (for M.E.I.C.).)

E 799/448/93] No. 132

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received February 22.)

(No. 53.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, February 21, 1940.*

MY telegram No. 52.

Regent has just given me following account of the situation:—

After being informed by Hussein Fawzi Shabatz of the objection felt by him and [illegible] Cabinet, Regent, on the advice of Nuri Pasha, consulted other representative officers. By them his Highness was assured that the army would loyally accept the Cabinet appointed by him, whether it included Nuri Pasha and Taha or not. [illegible] unspecified appointments were made, Regent asked them for a list of those whom they feared, and this included the Suwaidi family and Madfai.

After ascertaining that Nuri Pasha and Taha were quite willing either to serve in the new Cabinet or to be omitted at his discretion, Regent now proposes to leave them out and appoint a neutral Cabinet [illegible] politicians on either side. He had hoped that the President of Senate would be Prime Minister. The latter has declined, but meeting will take place to-night, at which final appointment of the new Government may be made.

Course proposed looks like a demonstration of impartiality and a stoppage of the gap measure. Regent contemplates new election at an early date, and thinks it may thereafter be [group undecypherable] led until forms of more normal Government in which Nuri Pasha and Taha might again serve and Rashid Ali also be included. His Highness assured me that there would be no change in foreign policy.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 15 (for Middle East Intelligence Centre).)

E 800/448/93] No. 133

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received February 22.)

(No. 55.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, February 22, 1940.*

MY telegram No. 53.

Nuri Pasha sent me message at 10 a.m. stating that he had consented to re- [illegible]

Minister of Justice and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Communications, who would be dropped. Nuri Pasha himself would hold first two portfolios here until new Ministers could be chosen

Amin Zaki would take the third

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 16 (for Middle East Intelligence Centre))

E 831 448 93 No. 134

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received February 23.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, February 22, 1940*

MY telegram No. 52

I took the opportunity of a *tête à tête* conversation to encourage the Regent in the assertion of his authority

I pointed out that in the absence of effective parliamentary control there was obviously the danger of intervention by the army or even the tribes, such as had occurred in the past, unless he himself could intervene with authority when changes of Government became necessary. If any of the interventions developed, the consequences for the stability of the country might obviously be serious. I said [illegible] felt that, while he must be pleased he need not be at all surprised at the expressions of loyalty and confidence which his actions had evoked

I also expressed the hope to the Regent that he would be able to take ill-feeling, rancour and any tendencies to violence out of the atmosphere, and afford protection to those vacating office against unfair treatment by incomers, who would, after all, themselves be outgoers in due course. At the same time, I informed His Royal Highness of the tenor of your telegram No. 32 and read to him the greater part of paragraph 4

[illegible] previous night, was tired, but evidently pleased with the loyalty shown to him [illegible] by the Chief of Staff, the Regent, at Nuri Pasha's suggestion, brought in other [illegible] the result of his efforts, and I hope that one good result of the crisis may be to [illegible] his self confidence and influence

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 17 (for M.I.C.E.))

E 820 448 93 No. 135

[illegible]

No. [illegible]

[illegible] *February* [illegible] 1940

MY [illegible]

[illegible] yesterday afternoon for new Cabinet as follows

Premier and Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs: Nuri Said.
Interior and Acting Justice: Umar Nazmi
Finance: Rauf Bahrani
Defence: Taha al Hashimi
Communications: Amin Zaki
Economics: Sadiq Bassam
Education: Sami Shaukat
Social Affairs: Saib Jabir

Please inform B.B.C.

E 836 448 93 No. 136

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received February 23.)

(No. 61.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, February 23, 1940*

MY telegram No. 56.

When congratulating Prime Minister this morning on his resumption of office I suggested that he might now have a good opportunity to improve the [illegible] of conciliation. This might help him later on, if he so desired, to secure adhesion of some of his present opponents, *e.g.*, the Suwaidis

2. The Prime Minister assured me that such was his intention. The Cabinet would probably remain in its present form until the Rustam murder case had been settled, but in about three or four weeks' time one of the two vacancies which he had kept in the Cabinet would perhaps be offered to Naji Suwaidi. He himself, while remaining as Minister for Foreign Affairs, might then be replaced as Prime Minister by Rashid Ali or someone else. By continuing too long as Prime Minister he did not wish to give appearance of clinging to that office or having ambitions as dictator. His subsequent remarks about the Suwaidis and Madfai were, however, not very flattering, so I do not feel too confident that the inclusion of one of them will be realised. Nor, evidently, did he think that Rashid Ali had enhanced his political reputation by his timid behaviour

3. I pointed the moral of conciliation by referring to your telegram No. 32 and reading to General Nuri the message contained in paragraph 4. He assured me of his intention to secure complete justice and impartiality for the accused, and said that, as the Shias now had more confidence in him, he was better able to withstand their demands. The trial would have to take place before the military court at Al Rashid camp, but it would be open to the public, and the accused would have proper legal representation. The case would take place as soon as possible, and its disposal should do much to clear the atmosphere

4. In General Nuri's opinion, the position of the Regent had been greatly strengthened by the crisis, as the army had shown its complete loyalty. The Prime Minister denied circumstantial reports which have reached me that the military camp at Washash, just outside Bagdad, had been on the verge of making a *coup*. I believe, nevertheless, that the situation was at one time serious.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 19 (Middle East Intelligence Centre))

E 848 848 93 No. 137

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received February 26.)

(No. 65.)

HIS Majesty's Ambassador at Bagdad presents his compliments to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and has the honour to transmit to him a copy of a memorandum, dated the 7th February by the oriental secretary at this embassy, respecting Soviet propaganda in Iraq

Bagdad, February 13, 1940

Enclosure in No. 137

Soviet Propaganda in Iraq

IN the discussion of Soviet or Communist propaganda it is important to distinguish between propaganda organised by the Soviet authorities or their semi-official political agencies, and that large and liberal discontent with things as they are which [illegible] Bolshevism. The first is an organised activity with a positive objective, the second merely a symptom of infection with ideas which have stirred the minds of men from time immemorial

2. It is some time since there was any convincing evidence of the existence of real Soviet propaganda in this country. Between 1930 and 1937 there were from time to time manifestations of the working of Communist ideas among the working classes in the bigger towns. A few Iraqis visited Russia between 1930 and 1935 and some attended courses of training in propaganda. Most returned disillusioned but one or two were apparently converted to Marxist ideals. In 1935 a small group of young men carried on Communist activities in Bagdad. Pamphlets in the Moscow style were distributed on several occasions workmen in the railway workshops at Saleshiya and once or twice hammer and sickle flags were found hung up in the main streets in the early morning.

3. A number of arrests were made, and a small printing press used for producing leaflets was confiscated. The Government strengthened the relevant sections of the Penal Code and in September 1937 the Harmful Propaganda (Prevention of) Law was enacted.

4. In the late autumn of 1937 the Government showed further uneasiness about the spread of communism. Eleven young men in the technical services of the Iraqi Army were arrested and two junior officials in the railways were similarly dealt with. Their misdeeds do not seem to have been anything more serious than the distribution of a limited number of crude pamphlets condemning the exploitation of workers by capital sta

5. These were believed to have been printed in Beirut where the French Communist party seem to have had some form of organisation for carrying on propaganda.

6. [illegible] communistic activities, and a little later in the year the Penal Code was again amended in such a manner as to render all persons who disseminate the doctrines of communism liable to seven years' imprisonment.

7. From the early months of 1938 until the outbreak of war in September 1939 little was heard in Iraq of Soviet propaganda, though from time to time reports were received of subversive talk loosely described as bolshevism among various discontented elements. Since last September the development of a war-time understanding between Russia and Germany has, of course, led to much speculation about Russian policy in the east. The possibility of a Russian advance into Persia has been in the minds of many Iraqis and among the Kurds, who experienced a Russian invasion during the last European war; the prospect of history repeating itself has quite understandably been a matter of close concern. It seems probable that there are Kurds who, in these circumstances, are thinking that this war may give an opportunity to the Kurds to lay the foundations of their national unity and independence in the way that the Arabs did in the last. From this thought it is but a short step to the idea that Russia [illegible] by Great Britain in the Arab Nationalist movement which began with the Sherif [illegible] of the Caucasus her agents may endeavour to exploit this expectancy, but it does not seem that such an attempt has yet begun. If an approach to the Kurds is ever made through their nationalist ambitions, Armenian agents will perhaps be chosen for the task. Kurdish and Armenian Nationalists once tried to make common cause, and the idea, with variations, might be developed by the Soviet Government. Armenian agents could be found with a knowledge of Kurdistan and the Kurdish language. Their task would not, however, be easy, for the Kurds have unpleasant memories of the last Russian invasion of their country. Nevertheless, it would seem that it is in Kurdistan, which offers a field for work against Turkey and Persia as well as Iraq, that the most ambitious propaganda could be undertake

8. In the Arab parts of Iraq, Soviet propaganda would have better chances of success among the working people than among the tribes. If an organised campaign were started, its aim would probably be to create unrest and disorder among the railway workers, the labour on the oil fields, and the large body of labour employed at the Habbaniya air base. Here again Armenians are likely to be chosen as agents. They are clever intriguers and already more infected with communistic ideas than other elements. The Soviet Government would, however find it difficult to make propaganda of this kind effective without a suitable organisation established close enough to direct it with energy. No such organisation seems to exist at present.

9. Moreover, having regard to their record during the past few years the Iraqi Government may be relied upon to act quickly to put a stop to such propaganda once it became evident. Soviet agents working among large groups of labour in places where police control is strong would be easier to deal with than those working elusively in the Kurdish mountains, where they would be difficult to trace and arrest. The Iraqi Government are already, it seems, alive to the threat of Soviet propaganda, and a small pamphlet denouncing the [illegible] Department, though its official origin is not disclosed.

10. The press attaché is working up matter for anti Soviet publicity and has asked the Ministry of Information for more. The Foreign Office paper "British Propaganda Concerning the Soviet Union" provides a guide to the [illegible] have, in fact, been brought out in the Iraqi Government pamphlet mentioned above. The Iraqi press is attacking the Soviet Government's aggression on Finland, which in Iraq, as in other countries, has falsified many hopes about Russia's part in the making of a new world.

V. HOLT

Bagdad, February 7, 1940.

E 918 448 93] No. 138

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received February 28.)

(No. 65.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, February 28, 1940.*

MY telegram No. 61.

The Prime Minister used stern language about political crimes in Iraq in his broadcast speech yesterday evening (summary of which was telegraphed in my telegram No. 20 to Eastpax).

I therefore thought it expedient to speak to him again yesterday morning on lines of paragraph 4 of your telegram No. 32 and also alluded to the impression which had been produced in many quarters by the Hikmat Sulaiman case. He assured me that his sole aim was that impartial justice should be done without fear or favour. He thought the trial might begin to-day. It would be public and the accused would be allowed the fullest legal help. He may not have appreciated my reference to the matter, and I do not think I can intervene further except perhaps to the extent of another word to the Regent. I remain rather apprehensive, however, that, even if neither of the ex Ministers is condemned to severe sentence, one or both may be treated like Hikmat Sulaiman.

As regards the three points which he had stated in broadcast would be considered by the Government after the trial the Prime Minister explained that the defence precautions meant the practice of black-outs in the towns and completion of defence works in the neighbourhood of Qaraghan provided for in joint defence [illegible] studied by special committee set up by the Madfai Government (see Sir M. Peterson's despatch No. 70 of 1939).

He mentioned that dissolution of present Parliament, which would shortly take place had become an urgent necessity owing to dangerous tension that had developed between Shiah and Sunni Deputies in consequence of the murder of the Minister of Finance and subsequent events.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 21 (for Middle East Intelligence Centre).)

E 918 448 93] No. 139

Viscount Halifax to Sir B. Newton (Bagdad).

(No. 49.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, March 4, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 65 [of 28th February: Arrests of Saleh Najio and Ibrahim Kemal].

I approve your action.

2. I note that although General Nuri "thought" on 27th February that trial might begin next day he made no reference to any conclusions reached by special committee (see your despatch No 51 [of 2nd February]). I should be grateful if you could ascertain privately whether committee has reported, and if so in what sense

(Addressed to Bagdad No 49 Repeated to Cairo, No 116, for M E.I C)

E 1034 448 93] No. 140

Sir B Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received March 6.)

By Bag

(No 21 Saving)
(Telegraphic) *En clair* *Bagdad, February 29, 1940*

MY telegram No 65

Prime Minister also stated that he proposed soon to publish draft law amending Constitution, in which he would embody principal recommendations of committee set up in 1938 to examine working of Organic Law of 1924 After dissolution he would go to country for support for this law General election would be in May and new Parliament would be summoned in June

2. It would deal only with amendments to Constitution and would then be dissolved under article 119 of Organic Law This means that after imp[illegible] dissolution no ordinary business will be dealt with by Parliament for [illegible] eight months

(Repeated to Cairo, No 5. Saving (for M E I C).)

[E 1019 448 93] No 141

Sir B Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received March 6)

(No. 66)
My Lord, *Bagdad, February 27, 1940*

IN addition to the telegraphic reports sent at the time, I have the honour to submit to your Lordship the following general account of the Cabinet crisis which recently occurred in this country

2. During the afternoon of Saturday the 17th February, Nuri Said called [illegible] to inform me of his intention to resign in order that the prosecution of those charged with the murder of Rustam Haidar should take place under some other Prime Minister His difficulties of late had been considerable, but he might have carried on had it not been for their aggravation by the death of Rustam Haidar and the problem [illegible] to give me to understand that arrangements for the new Cabinet were cut and dried He himself would become Minister for Foreign Affairs and three of the old Ministers would be dropped. Their successors had not then been finally chosen [illegible] consideration

3. On the 18th or 19th February Nuri Said tendered his resignation (a translation of his letter to the Regent and of His Royal Highness's reply is enclosed herein (1)) but subsequent events did not develop according to plan

4. On the afternoon of Monday, the 19th February, I met Rashid Ali, and it was soon evident from his talk that his Cabinet was not so ready as Nuri Said had suggested. He spoke of one or two prominent men who, for one reason or another, would or could not join, and he was evidently still perplexed how to fill several important posts. His suggestion that [illegible] than that of Minister of Defence seemed [illegible] Cabinet by Wednesday The resignation of the previous Cabinet was to be published on the Tuesday and Nuri Pasha had [illegible] simultaneous announcement of its successor

(1) Not printed

[illegible] to establish the precise sequence of events, but it seems that General Husain Fauzi [illegible] Commanding the First Division, had begun in collaboration to interfere in the formation of the new Cabinet. They had meetings with a number of officers, represented their views to men with whom Rashid Ali was in touch concerning their joining the new Cabinet, and expressed to Rashid Ali their objections to a Cabinet in which either Taha al Hashimi or Nuri Said was included Husain Fauzi refused to serve any longer under Taha on the ground that this Minister, in usurpation of the functions of the Chief of Staff and for political motives, saw too much of the subordinate officers. Amin al Umari no doubt [illegible] all repudiated the two [illegible] of the State. At the [illegible] a list of these persons, wh[illegible] Suwaidi and Jamil Madfai Shortly afterwards the Regent informed the two generals that they had been relieved of their appointments and placed on pension Husain Fauzi seems to have accepted the situation and returned to his private house, but there are circumstantial stories that Amin al Umari endeavoured to collect troops in the Washash cantonment on the right bank of the river, quite near the Regent's Palace, for a movement against the Government [illegible] Al Rashid (formerly known as Hinaidi), and any mutinous intentions that officers in the Washash barracks may have entertained seem to have been abandoned when it was known that the Regent had dismissed Amin al Umari and the Chief of Staff The Prime Minister has told me since that there was never real danger of serious mutiny, but in that event it is difficult to explain the condition of hysterical anxiety of his nephew (Tariq al Askari eldest son of the late Jafar Pasha) when he rushed into the counsellor's house early on the 21st February to tell an incoherent story of a night of alarums, excursions and impending *coups* Troop movements and elaborate military precautions were also evident while Nuri's own whereabouts was left shrouded in mystery Nevertheless, whatever may be the facts of the situation in the Washash barracks during the night of the 20th-21st February, it seems [illegible] and that the commanders of the provincial garrisons, on receiving news of the situation in Bagdad, at once informed the Regent of their unconditional loyalty

7. The Regent spent the morning of the 21st February in vain endeavours to find a Prime Minister. The President of the Senate, Sayid Muhammad al Sadr, declined the honour, and consultations with other leading public men also failed to produce a solution of the problem In the afternoon His Royal Highness informed me with confidence that he expected to be able to form a Cabinet of senior officials having [illegible] groups. The men whom he had in mind included Abdul Aziz al Qassab Comptroller-General of Accounts, Ali Mumtaz, Director General of Revenue [illegible] Director General in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and others holding similar positions. They could obviously have done little more than tide over the crisis, but this temporary solution was dismissed a few hours later as impracticable, amongst other reasons because Aziz al Qassab would have been quite inacceptable to the Shiahs

8. An appeal was then made to Nuri who consented to resume office as Prime Minister, and soon succeeded in forming a new Cabinet It is very much the same as the Cabinet that Rashid Ali was expected to form but without Rashid Ali, who remains at the Palace with much diminished prestige Although the crisis passed without a military *coup*, it is apparent that the army played a [illegible] Nevertheless the Regent's [illegible] and it may well prove that his handling of the situation will increase his political influence and strengthen his confidence in himself and his judgment

The Prime Minister also emerges with an enhanced reputation, and though his difficulties have not been solved and his opponents have been neither conciliated nor dispersed, their weakness has been exposed, and N[illegible] position is by comparison stronger and his personal popularity g[illegible] before his resignation. He entertains the thought of filling the v[illegible] his Cabinet with men from one or other of the groups not at present represented. But it is early yet to appraise his chances of success. There are three Ministers of the last Cabinet who do not return. Of these Jalal Baban and Subhi al Daftari are no great loss, but I regret the absence of Ali Jaudat. He has always shown himself to be frank, helpful, and reasonable in all the dealings that I have had with him, and, though he has no outstanding intellectual gifts or influence, [illegible] has sound common sense and little of that personal vanity that has so often tempted Iraqi Foreign Ministers to act unwisely. It is to his credit that the reason given to me by Nuri for his omission was that Ali Jaudat had compromised himself by prejudging the case of Sabih Najib and Ibrahim Kemal in favour of [illegible] used and advocating too openly their release.

10. In the new Cabinet Amin Zaki returns to his old Ministry after four years in the wilderness, and Rauf Bahrani comes back to the post which he filled for a year without distinction in Yasin al Hashimi's last administration. The transfer of Dr. Sami Shawkat from Social Affairs to Education will probably lead to an increase of military training in the schools. He made his first appearance at the Ministry in uniform.

11. I am sending copies of this despatch and its enclosures to His Majesty's Ambassador at Cairo, His Majesty's Minister at Tehran, His Majesty's High Commissioner at Jerusalem, His Majesty's Minister at Jedda, to the Governor General of India, and to the combined Middle East Intelligence Centre, Cairo.

I have, &c.

BASIL NEWTON

[E 1052 250 93] No. 142

Mr. Houstoun Boswall to Viscount Halifax. (*Received March 7.*)

No. 75.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, March 6, 1940.*

(R.) YOUR telegram No. 49. Trial began 3rd March before large public including ex-Ministers, Senators and Deputies. Minister of Finance's assailant was charged with murder, and Ibrahim Kamal, Sabih Najib and Arif Qaftan with having incited him to commit this crime.

Four of Baghdad's leading lawyers appeared for the defence. Court consisted [illegible] The trial continued on 4th and 5th March, and may last a week. Proceedings are being fully reported in the press. Popular opinion on the published evidence [illegible] doubt to gleeful satisfaction that it exposes the utter absurdity of charges brought against them. Same may be said of such more enlightened opinions as have been expressed to me too. (End of R.)

It would be difficult for me to find out privately terms of report of Committee of Inquiry. All the members gave solemn undertakings of secrecy and in these circumstances it would be embarrassing to Major Wilkins if I asked him to disclose the proceedings. I understand that in the absence of agreement the committee presented several reports.

(R.) (Repeated to Cairo, No. 22 (for Middle East Inte[illegible] Centre).) (End of R.)

[E 1148 1148 93] No. 143

Translation from Al Waqayi' Al Iraqiyah *No.* 1774, *dated February* 20, 1940.

Law No. 3 of 1940 for the Write-off of Irrecoverable Sums and the Grant of Compensation to Muhaizems. (*Enclosure No. 3 in Baghdad Despatch No. 94 dated March 4, 1940.—Received March 14.*)

WITH the approval of the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies, I hereby order the enactment of the following law:—

Article 3.

(*a*) A sum of I.D. 27,873,676, due from the Sheikhs of Kowen and Muhammerah in respect of jarib tax for the years prior to the date of coming into force of the Law for the Collection of Istilak Tax on Agricultural Products, shall be written off.

Article 7.

This law shall come into force from the date of its publication in the *Official Gazette*.

Article 8.

The Minister of Finance is charged with the execution of this law.

Done at Baghdad this 2nd day of Muharram, 1359, and the 10th day of February, 1940.

ABDUL ILLAH

TAHA AL HASHIMI,
Acting Minister of Finance.

NURI AL SAID
Prime Minister.

[E 1225 45 34] No. 144

Mr. Houstoun Boswall to Viscount Halifax.—(*Received March 18.*)

No. 80.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, March 17, 1940.*

IRAQI Government are showing increasing nervousness about the possibility of Iran coming under Russian and German influence. It is regarded as significant that the Iranian Minister for Foreign Affairs recently refrained from replying to telegram which Nuri Pasha, assuming portfolio for Foreign Affairs, sent to Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Saadabad Governments declaring his desire for continued co-operation between Ministers, signatories of pact, but only sent a personal telegram.

Iraqi Government suspect that Iranian Consul Khanikin, is engaged in [illegible] is his proper sphere and are thinking of asking Iranian Government to remove consulate to Basrah on grounds that it is only consulate not [illegible] at headquarters of Iraq.

[illegible] this step, however, Prime Minister would welcome your opinion [illegible]—

1. Whether there is any strong objection in principle to making request to Iranian Government on the grounds proposed.
2. If not, whether in present international situation he should act at once or wait for a little.

(Repeated to Tehran, No. 12.)

[E 1249 448 93] No. 145

Mr Houstoun Boswall to Viscount Halifax.—(Received March 19.)

(No. 91.)

Baghdad, March 18, 1940.

RESIGNATION of Salih Jabr, Minister for Social Affairs, was announced this morning.

Prime Minister tells me that he did his utmost to dissuade Salih Jabr from taking this step, but was unable to meet the demands which he made for severe action against all suspected of being implicated in the murder of the late Minister of Finance or concerned with the army difficulties that followed the Prime Minister's resignation short time ago. This makes third vacancy in Cabinet.

Prime Minister expects verdict of the court in murder trial to be promulgated after two days, and fears that, if those accused of incitement are acquitted, Shiah may make trouble.

Opposition in the Senate are exceedingly active, and the Prime Minister foresees difficulties in Parliament when budget debate opens on 21st March.

(Repeated to Cairo (for Middle East Intelligence Centre), despatch No. 335.)

[E 1306 250 93] No. 146

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received March 21.)

(No. 93.)
(Telegraphic.)

Baghdad, March 21, 1940.

MY telegram No. 91.

I am informed reliably that Haidar murder trial closed yesterday and that following sentences were promulgated: Assailant death. Subih Najib 1 year's [illegible] not has not been published [illegible]

Repeated to Cairo, No. 21 (for Middle East Intelligence Centre).

[E 1310 280 93] No. 147

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received March 22.)

No. 95.)
(Telegraphic.)

Baghdad, March 22, 1940.

MY telegram No. 93.

Courier 16th March.

Sentences are [illegible] under reference, though it is revealed that Subih Najib was acquitted of charge of incitement but sentenced under Baghdad Penal Code for exciting hatred against the Government. Please inform the British Broadcasting Corporation.

[E 1283 45 34] No. 148.

Viscount Halifax to Sir B. Newton (Baghdad).

(No. 70.)
(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, March 22, 1940.

MR HOUSTOUN BOSWALL'S telegram No. 89 of 18th March. [Relations between Iraq and Iran.]

Not having seen text of General Nuri's telegram, or of Iranian answer, I cannot judge whether failure to reply officially had any particular significance.

2. I recognise that General Nuri may have information of his own regarding attitude of Iranian Government, but I should say myself that they are determined to maintain independent line towards Soviet Union as long as they can. As explained in my telegram No. 477 [of 19th December], it is only natural, in view of exposed position of Iran, that Iranian Government should proceed with great caution. In the circumstances, although Iraqi Government, like His Majesty's Government, must stand firm on questions affecting their essential interests and take necessary precautions in case attitude of Iranian Government were to change, I think it important that they should restrain impatience and work steadily for improved relations with Iran in full understanding of difficulties which confront her.

3. Having agreed, in the first place, to establishment of Iranian Consulate [illegible] suggesting that it should be moved elsewhere. Moreover even though Baqubah [illegible] if it is situated at Khanikin. In any case removal to Baqubah might hamper consul's activities, but could not render him harmless.

4. It would be open to Iraqi Government, if they had proof that consul was engaged in undesirable activities, to ask for his removal from Iraq as [illegible] as well as incorrect and that his successor was likely to be an improvement in this respect.

5. You may inform Prime Minister accordingly.

(Repeated to Tehran, No. 44.)

[E 1375 448 93] No. 149

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received March 27.)

(No. 100. Very Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.)

Baghdad, March 26, 1940.

MY telegram No. 61 [illegible]

Prime Minister informed me this morning in strict confidence that he hoped [illegible] would remain Minister for Foreign Affairs. Rashid Ali would be Prime Minister, and Naji Shaukat and Naji Suwaidi in turn would be invited to take respectively Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Finance. He hoped that they would accept and that Salih Jabr would be persuaded to return to Ministry of Social Affairs. [illegible] Gailani (now chargé d'affaires at Cairo) would be Master of Ceremonials [illegible]

2. Prime Minister revealed that Mufti had privately worked for peace [illegible] Regent promising to serve under any ex-Prime Minister to whom Regent might see fit to entrust Government.

3. I congratulated the Prime Minister on the wisdom of his continued efforts [illegible] permitting Mufti to become active in Iraqi politics.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 30 (for Middle East Intelligence Centre); Tehran, No. 4, Saving, and Angora, No. 1, Saving.)

[E 1445 448 93] No. 150

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received April 1.)

(No. 103A.)
(Telegraphic.) *En clair.*

Baghdad, April 1, 1940.

MY telegram No. 100.

Following Cabinet formed yesterday:

Premier and Interior: Rashid Ali.
Foreign Affairs: Nuri Said.
Finance: Naji Suwaidi.
Justice: Naji Shawkat.
Defence: Taha al Hashimi.
Communications and Works: Umar Nazmi.
Education: Sadiq Bassam.
Economics: Amin Zaki.
Social Affairs: Rauf Bahrani.

Please inform B.B.C.

(E 1474 448 93) No. 151

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received April 3.)

(No. 108.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Bagdad, April 2, 1940*

MY telegram No. 103.

I called on new Prime Minister on 2nd April. In most cordial terms he assured me of his intention to strengthen ties of friendship with Great Britain in spirit of Treaty of Alliance, and of his desire for closest official and personal friendship and collaboration with myself.

He stated that his programme which would be published in a few days would be a brief declaration of his intention to carry on work started by his predecessor with a [illegible] reaffirmation] of foreign policy laid down by Nuri Pasha in March 1939 (my despatch No. 131 of 30th March, 1939).

In reply to my enquiry, he said that he did not propose to dissolve Parliament which would remain in session until end of April.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 31 (for Middle East Intelligence Centre), Tehran No. 5, Saving, Angora, No. 2, Saving, and Government of India, No. 1, Saving.)

E 1475 1475 93) No. 152

Viscount Halifax to Sir B. Newton (Bagdad)

(No. 80.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, April 3, 1940*

IF you see no objection, please express to General Nuri my sincere appreciation of the cordiality and steadfastness with which, as Prime Minister, he has throughout collaborated with His Majesty's Government.

2. You may add that the knowledge of his friendship to Great Britain has been of great assistance to me in these difficult times, and that I look forward to continuing to collaborate with him in his new post for the mutual benefit of our two countries.

E 1538 48 34) No. 153

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received April 9.)

(No. 133.)

HIS Majesty's Ambassador at Bagdad presents his compliments to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and, with reference to Foreign Office telegram No. 76, dated the 22nd March, 1940, has the honour to transmit to him a copy of a minute, dated the 26th March, 1940, by His Majesty's Ambassador, Bagdad, respecting Iran–Iraq relations.

Bagdad, March 29, 1940.

[illegible] No. 1[illegible]

Minute.

I COMMUNICATED to the Prime Minister this morning the general sense of Foreign Office telegram No. 76, reading to him the last sentence of paragraph 2. He said that the Ministry of Defence were very anxious about the activities of spies of Persian nationality in the Khanaqin district, and feared that these men were probably acting on behalf of the German and Russian Legations in Tehran. He thought that the Iraqi Government must either ask the Persian Government to remove the consulate (under whose wing the spies were working) to Baquba or have the Khanaqin district declared a military area and prohibit all foreigners (excepting the employees of the Khanaqin Oil Company) from residing therein. He pointed out that, though a Persian Consulate had been established for a long time at Khanaqin, the Persians had refused permission for an Iraqi Consulate

to be established at Qasr-i-Shirin. I explained that, though the Iraqi Government should of course take all measures really necessary to safeguard her interests, it would be a mistake to act hastily and in a manner likely to irritate the Persians and to drive them into the arms of Germany and Russia. Any action taken should be fully explained to the Persians, and everything possible done to prevent such action from having the appearance of being directed against Persia.

2. The Prime Minister said that he understood the force of my remarks, and promised to have a frank talk with the Persian Minister before taking any further action.

B. C. N.

March 26, 1940.

E 1642 45 34 No. 154

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received April 12.)

(No. 29. Sav[illegible])
([illegible]graphic.) *En clair.* *Bagdad, April 3, 1940.*

Your R. telegram No. 76 and my despatch No. 133.

M[illegible]r for Foreign Affairs told me yesterday that he had had long talk with Iranian Minister. He had explained that the Iraqi Government were [illegible] German or Russian agents, and proposed to declare the Khanaqin district and certain areas adjacent to frontier near Ilaam protected areas under Residence Law and to exclude all foreigners. Later they would ask the Iranian Government to agree to transfer their Khanaqin Consulate to Baquba. Minister had received this news well, but had asked that he should be given opportunity to prepare the ground in Tehran before action was taken here.

2. Minister had enquired whether there was any truth in reports received in Tehran that it was proposed to create an autonomous Kurdish enclave within Iraq. The Minister for Foreign Affairs had been able to satisfy him that such stories were quite without foundation, and had suggested that they had probably come from enemy sources. The Minister referred also to reports of Iraqi military concentrations on the Iranian frontier. Minister for Foreign Affairs had reassured him on this point, and had taken opportunity to explain the defence works planned at Qaraghan. He had pointed out that these works were entirely precautionary and in no way directed against Iran.

(Repeated to Tehran, No. 6, Saving, reference Bagdad despatch No. 29 (to Tehran).)

(E 1639 448 93) No. 155

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received April 12.)

(No. 140.)
My Lord, *Bagdad, April 1, 1940.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you that a discussion on the internal situation in this country took place in the Chamber of Deputies on the 24th March during the course of the budget debate. The speakers devoted their remarks mainly to the question of stability, a matter which, as your Lordship is aware, has with good reason occupied the attention of both politicians and the public in Iraq during recent years.

2. The Prime Minister himself made a short but vigorous speech in which he emphasised the point that stable conditions could not be secured by drastic measures or the use of brute force, they could only be realised, he said, by the careful treatment of administrative and constitutional problems in the light of reason and justice. He thought that an outstanding defect in the Constitution was the powers that it gave for the pardoning of those convicted of political crime. He reminded the Chamber that it was the intention of the Government to introduce certain amendments to the Organic Law, and these amendments would include provisions that would ensure that political criminals suffered the just punishment of their crimes.

3. The Minister of Defence, who also spoke, challenged the statements made by certain Deputies that stability was entirely absent from politics in Iraq. He pointed out that political incidents were common in most countries, in many countries, indeed, they were a more frequent and more disturbing feature of political life than they were in Iraq, and by comparison Iraq could show a record of government of which her people need not be ashamed. The Government was, he said, determined to keep the army out of politics.

4. Many Deputies paid tribute to the work achieved by the late Minister of [illegible]. They deplored the loss which the country had suffered by his death, and from this theme passed to a denunciation of those responsible for the [illegible] stormy events which had destroyed the peace of Iraq during the past few years. Abdul Mahdi, a Shiah Deputy for the Euphrates, attributed these events to the spirit of greed which had entered into their hearts, and he declared that Baghdad had become a centre for plotting and political co[illegible]. The most deplorable feature of the history of recent years had, he said, [illegible] that the laws of the country had been violated by the very leaders to whom the people had entrusted the defence of the law and the maintenance of the Constitution.

5. Others referred to the Prime Minister's plan to establish stability through amendments to the Constitution. Few thought that this plan would be effective, and most pointed out that the problem which confronted them was not one that could be resolved by legislation as it had its roots in the weaknesses of character of the leaders of the country. What was needed was the suppression of political charlatanism. Several Deputies declared that the whole nation was gravely dissatisfied with the conduct of the political leaders in whom all faith had been lost. If the present state of affairs represented the fruits of democratic government then it was time, they said, that some other form of government was put in its place.

6. I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's representatives at Cairo, Jedda, Tehran, Jerusalem, India and the combined Middle East Intelligence Centre, Cairo.

I have, &c.
BASIL NEWTON

E 1725/446/93] No. 156

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received April 19.)

(No. 145.)
My Lord, *Baghdad, April 3, 1940.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 106 of the 1st April reporting the formation of a new Cabinet under Rashid Ali al Gailani, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a cutting(¹) from the *Iraq Times* of the 1st April giving a translation of Nuri Said's letter to the Regent explaining his resignation.

2. The real reason was clearly the same as that of his earlier resignation on the 19th February: his realisation of the fact that the time had come for a change. The attempt made then to form a new Cabinet on a wider basis failed owing to the developments described in my despatch No. 86 of the 27th February. [illegible] that he still hoped to succeed in his original intention. His difficulties in finding new colleagues when he was obliged to reform his Government must have made it even clearer to him than before that the time had come for another Prime Minister to take over the reins of Government.

3. The trial of those accused of the murder of Rustam Haidar having been ended and military intriguers having been overawed for the time being by the summary treatment of those who ventured to interfere in February, the way was made clear for another attempt to carry out the original plan of a new Cabinet under Rashid Ali. This time it did not miscarry, and, having regard to the complexity of the personal and political factors and the dangerous possibilities [illegible] Nuri Said's credit that a peaceful transition from one Government to another has at last been achieved.

(¹) Not printed.

4. The new Cabinet contains four members who have previously been Prime Ministers and the remainder have all had earlier experience of Cabinet office. There are two Shiahs and one Kurd. Nuri Said's retention of the portfolio of Foreign Affairs is a sign that no change is intended in foreign policy or in the Government's general attitude towards Iraq's special relations with Great Britain. Amin Zaki's transfer from Communications and Works to Economics will be welcomed by most of the senior British officials of the former Ministry, for he had been showing a tiresome tendency to interfere to excess in personal matters and in the technical work of his departments, but Rashid Ali's assumption of the portfolio of the Interior in addition to the presidency of the Council may prove to be a source of difficulty. His reputation at the Interior is bad [illegible], although in the course of a call this morning he has just mentioned to me that the Euphrates tribes have gone out of their way to show their satisfaction with his Government, he is not generally thought to enjoy their confidence.

5. The late Prime Minister himself is frankly pleased to be relieved of a [illegible] and is confident about the future. He feels that political discord has been la[illegible] looks upon the retention in the new Cabinet of so large a proportion of his old colleagues as a safeguard for the continuation of his own policy.

6. From my conversations with the Prime Minister and with Nuri Pasha, I judge that the individual members of the Cabinet are for the moment on their best behaviour towards each other, but I have some doubt whether this internal harmony will last for long. Much tact and forbearance will have to be shown by its leading personalities if serious dissensions are to be avoided.

7. I am sending copies of this despatch and its enclosure to His Majesty's representatives at Cairo, Tehran, Jedda, Jerusalem, to the Government of India and to the Combined Middle East Intelligence Centre, Cairo.

I have, &c.
BASIL NEWTON

E 1729/446/93] No. 157

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received April 19.)

(No. 156.)
My Lord, *Baghdad, April 8, 1940.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 108 of the 2nd April, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that one of the first acts of the new Government was to abolish the military court set up in the Rashid Cantonment in March 1939 by Nuri Pasha's Government (see paragraph 2 of Mr. Houston Boswall's despatch No. 130 of the 30th March, 1939).

2. This action has been warmly welcomed in the local press.

3. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Minister at Tehran, to the Government of India and to the Combined Middle East Intelligence Centre, Cairo.

I have, &c.
BASIL NEWTON

E 1732/446/93] No. 158

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received April 19.)

(No. 160.)
My Lord, *Baghdad, April 10, 1940.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 108 of the 2nd April, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a translation of a press report on a meeting of the Chamber of Deputies at which the Prime Minister made a statement on the policy of his Cabinet.

2. Rashid Ali wisely refrained from drawing up a lengthy programme, and [illegible] Nuri Said in March 1939 (see my despatch No. 131 of the 30th March, 1939) and to reaffirm his predecessor's declarations on foreign policy.

3. The one new feature was the undertaking to create a national financial reserve for use in emergency. This idea is credited to the new Minister of Finance, Naji Suwaidi, who is also popularly believed to desire to curtail expenditure on the army.

4. The debate on the Government's programme afforded another opportunity, which many Deputies took, to talk about the policy of the Allies in Palestine and Syria and certain members also raised the question of Iraq's right to take part in peace negotiations at the end of the war. From the ministerial benches nothing was said on these two points, although of course the Iraqi Government have already received an assurance that they will have a voice in peace negotiations (see my despatch No. 554 of the 27th September last).

5. I am sending copies of this despatch and its enclosure to His Majesty's representatives at Cairo, Tehran and Jedda, to the Government of India, to His Majesty's High Commissioner for Palestine and to the Combined Middle East Intelligence Centre, Cairo.

I have, &c.
BASIL NEWTON

Enclosure in No. 158

Extract from the Proceedings of Parliament: Chamber of Deputies meeting of Saturday, April 6, 1940.

THE meeting, which lasted for some three and half hours, was devoted to the Recession of the Government's programme. This was read by the Prime Minister and was as follows:

"Our Cabinet has shouldered the burden of responsibility, trusting in God and in the confidence of his Highness the Regent and of the members of this House. Relying on the co-operation of the Iraqi people in these difficult times it will undertake whatever the progress of the country demands in any sphere.

"The lines of policy to be followed by the Cabinet do not differ from those generally followed by previous Cabinets, in particular by the Saadi Cabinet, the majority of whose members are included in the present Cabinet. The latter's programme, which was endorsed by the House, deals with the country's most pressing needs and we see therefore no necessity for repeating it here where deeds, not ornate phraseology and wordy repetition are expected of us, deeds which rouse the country to take action where its needs are vital. We cannot but reaffirm, however, that our first duty as regards foreign policy must be:—

"(1) To strengthen the foundations of Arab alliance and to continue to work for the realisation of the aspirations of other neighbouring Arab countries, whose ties with Iraq and Arab States and whose need for independence and freedom should be the mutual aim of them all. This aim is a complement to Iraq's foreign policy as applied to the obligations and promises contracted by the Allies and the aims announced by them.

"(2) To fulfil the obligations of friendship and alliance with Great Britain on the basis of mutual interest and exchange of benefits.

"(3) To strengthen the bonds of friendship and collaboration with the Sandabad Powers.

"(4) To maintain friendly relations with all other friendly nations.

"As regards internal policy, greater attention is to be paid to the spread of a spirit of security and tranquillity in the country, and to the protection of personal freedom by ensuring respect for the Constitution and other laws as being above all other considerations.

"As regards finance, the Government will endeavour to curtail unnecessary expenditure and to postpone expenditure on schemes capable of postponement until after the present crisis, thereby enabling the Government to save and to create a reserve to meet the crisis which must at all times be reckoned with."

* * * * * *

E 1747/1478/93] No. 159

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received April 19.)

[By Bag.]

No. 31 (Saving.)
(Telegraphic.) *En clair.* *Baghdad, April 10, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 80.

I gave your message orally to the Minister for Foreign Affairs yesterday evening, when he called at the Embassy just before leaving for Basra, and shall repeat it to him in writing.

2. He was most gratified and asked me to send his thanks and assurances of his continued friendship and collaboration.

E 1752/47/93] No. 160

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received April 19.)

No. 124.
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, April 19, 1940.*

PRIME Minister has told me that at recent meeting of the Supreme Defence Council there was anxious discussion of Iraqi lack of any anti aircraft guns and of the need for more knowledge of British plans for giving military assistance to [illegible] tion with the Commander-in-chief, Middle East, who has, I understand, been authorised by the War Office, after consultation with the Foreign Office, to furnish such information as he thinks fit.

Although anti aircraft guns could have little more than moral effect, there is no doubt that their complete absence is a cause of great and growing embarrassment to the Iraqi Government. Six would suffice, and I earnestly hope that, for political reasons affecting our own prestige, this number can be provided in the early future and Iraqi Government so informed.

After the above-mentioned meeting, Nuri Pasha consulted the Inspector- [illegible] groups undecypherable], these are 600 bren guns, 450 anti tank rifles, 120 three [illegible] mortars, and 2 batteries of medium artillery. Ammunition is also u[illegible] This could presumably be supplied from British military base [illegible] relieve Iraqi apprehensions it is desirable that Iraqi Government should be given this assurance without delay. Both efficiency and morale of the army are, in the [illegible] the brunt of any attack for some weeks.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 36 (for Commander-in-chief, Middle East).)

E 1216/110/93] No. 161

Foreign Office to the Treasury.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April 26, 1940.*

I AM directed by Viscount Halifax to request you to invite the attention of the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury to the question of the [illegible] Mubarak of Koweit and Sheikh Khazal of Mohammerah, by which they and their heirs and successors were promised tax-free possession of the estates of the two sheikhs in what is now Iraq.

2. Their Lordships will recall that in 1936 His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Baghdad addressed to the Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs a note in which suggestions were made for a comprehensive solution of this difficult question. The proposals of His Majesty's Government were, in brief, that they would make

no further claim against the Iraqi Government for the exemption of the properties of the two sheikhs from taxation in Iraq, provided that the Iraqi Government would for their part—

(a) Give a satisfactory undertaking to make no claim for arrears of (direct) taxation against either sheikh in respect of their properties in Iraq and

(b) Provide a satisfactory assurance that no discriminatory taxation would be imposed upon the properties of either in future

As an integral part of this settlement it was further proposed that all uncertainties should be removed in regard to the boundaries of the sheikhs' lands in Iraq, and a formal title be awarded to them through the application by a British official of land settlement to the areas in which the lands are situated. It was added that His Majesty's Government were prepared to abide by the decisions of the land settlement officer as to the boundaries of the lands in question and by any modifications of those decisions which might result from subsequent appeals to the special court provided by the law, and that they were [illegible] to make any claim against the Iraqi Government in respect of any changes which might result to the present boundaries of the sheikhs' lands in consequence of the land settlement procedure. In addition, His Majesty's Government were prepared (although the Iraqi Government were not specifically informed to that effect) themselves to compensate the heirs of Sheikh Mubarak and Sheikh Khazal for the losses which they had suffered in the past and would suffer in the future, in consequence of the introduction by the Iraqi Government in 1932 of a new system of indirect taxation (the Istihlak tax).

3. No progress had, however, been made in these negotiations by the end of 1937 and in the Treasury letter of the 10th January, 1938, it was stated that in [illegible] in principle that no further attempt should be made at that stage to reach a comprehensive settlement with the Iraqi [illegible] the present Sheikh of Koweit and with the [illegible] obtaining from them in return for lump sum payments, written acknowledgments releasing His Majesty's Government from any further liability in respect of any losses suffered as a result of the Istihlak tax since its imposition in 1932 and any future losses arising from that tax or any other tax on land or produce that might be levied thereafter. It was at the same time stated that the question of the amount of compensation to be offered and any other subsidiary matters arising out of this decision could be dealt with by informal discussions between the departments concerned.

4. After preliminary enquiries into the questions of detail involved, an interdepartmental meeting was held at the Foreign Office on the 21st April, 1938. At this meeting it was decided that His Majesty's Government could accept the figure submitted by the Sheikh of Koweit for the losses suffered in respect of the Istihlak tax from the years 1932-33 to 1936-37, and that this provided a [illegible] compensation due to him and to the other heirs of Sheikh Mubarak. [illegible] case was to strike an average for the years mentioned above (£1,087) and to multiply this figure by twenty [illegible] the other heirs a sum equal to twenty years' losses in respect of the future. The figure reached in this way was rounded up to £25,000. It was [illegible] that the heirs should be paid past proved losses for the seven years since 1932.

5. On the other hand, it was not considered possible for His Majesty's Government to accept similar figures for losses due to the Istihlak tax submitted by the administrator of the estates of Sheikh Khazal. Nor was it found possible to devise any means of reaching a satisfactory estimate of what these losses had in fact been. His Majesty's Government felt justified, however, in concluding from the estimates for the now abolished Land Tax made annually by the authorities in Iraq on the estates both of the Sheikh of Koweit and of Sheikh Khazal in the years preceding 1932 that the income from the latter was then, and might reasonably be supposed to have remained, a little less than one-half of that from the [illegible]. It was realised that this was a method of estimating the losses on the Mohammerah estates which might not be acceptable in a court of law, but this was not regarded as a matter in which it was essential for legal forms to be strictly followed, provided that His Majesty's Governments

were themselves satisfied that the heirs of Sheikh Khazal were not being treated unfairly. In the case of the Sheikh of Koweit, His Majesty's Government had a legal obligation, which is still in force, to a ruler whose goodwill is, incidentally, of considerable importance to them. The position with regard to the heirs of Sheikh Khazal is, however, rather different. The promise made by His Majesty's Government in 1914 was a promise to the Sheikh of Mohammerah in his capacity as an independent ruler, and was legally dependent on his continuing to be so. The sheikh is now dead, and had indeed ceased to be an independent ruler before his death; and, although His Majesty's Government regard themselves notwithstanding as under a moral obligation to pay fair compensation to the heirs, this compensation is, in their view, in effect an *ex gratia* payment. It was therefore thought unnecessary to negotiate with the heirs, [illegible] losses could justifiably be assumed without further investigation to be approximately half those of the heirs of the Sheikh of Koweit. The compensation to be paid to them was accordingly fixed upon the basis that it should be as nearly as [illegible] modifications in the method of calculation which the absence of any agreed figure as to actual losses in respect of the Istihlak tax since 1932 rendered inevitable. The calculation was made as follows: the assessed average annual loss on the estates of the Sheikh of Koweit from 1932-33 to 1936-37 (£1,087) was divided by two and the resultant figure multiplied by twenty-seven (twenty years in respect of future losses and seven years in respect of past losses since 1932).

6. Unfortunately even when these principles had been laid down, the actual task of negotiating an agreement with the Sheikh of Koweit and of effecting payment to the heirs of Sheikh Khazal proved both complicated and prolonged. In the first place, it was at that time thought desirable, in order to safeguard the position of the other heirs of the late Sheikh Mubarak, to pay compensation in respect of past losses only to the present sheikh, the compensation in respect of future losses being paid to a family council, if such a body could be established. Moreover, the question was raised whether the 1914 pledge should be taken to cover all the properties administered by Sheikh Mubarak at the time. So far as the properties of Sheikh Khazal were concerned, the question of payment was greatly complicated by the multiplicity of the heirs. There are, besides one surviving widow, thirteen sons and sixteen daughters, some of whom are dead and whose rights in the property have passed to their descendants or to their collateral heirs. A basis for the distribution of the compensation among all these persons has, however, now been reached which meets with the unofficial approval [illegible] in view of the objections of the Sheikh of Koweit, that it is not essential to insist upon the establishment of a family council, while on further examination it was considered reasonable to pay compensation in respect of all the properties administered in 1914 by Sheikh Mubarak. All these enquiries, which involved research into question of fact and Moslem law, have, however, necessarily taken a considerable time, and it has therefore only proved possible to authorise a definite approach to the Sheikh of Koweit in the last few days. Even now the heirs of Sheikh Khazal have not yet been informed of the amount of the compensation which will be paid to them on the signature by them of a suitable discharge, but it is hoped that this will prove possible in the immediate future.

7. In view of this delay, it has been considered unavoidable that the payment to be made to the heirs of Sheikh Khazal in respect of past losses should be increased by one year, i.e., from twenty-seven to twenty-eight times the assessed annual loss, or £15,218 in all. The figure to be paid to the Sheikh of Koweit has been increased in the same way by one further year's payment, in respect of losses for the year 1939-40, and, in order to save further delay, it has been decided not to require exact details of past losses in respect of those years for which such details are not already available, i.e., 1937-38, 1938-39 and 1939-40, but to pay compensation for these three years at the average rate of proved losses in the preceding years (£1,087). The compensation which will therefore be paid to the Sheikh of Koweit amounts to £8,696 in respect of losses from 1932 to the present time, and £22,000 in respect of future losses, or £30,696 in all.

8. [illegible] Sheikh [illegible] Secretary of State to the Department of Overseas Trade [illegible]

9. In conclusion, I am to remind their Lordships that, contrary to the expectations entertained in 1937 (see paragraph 3 above), the Iraqi Government have, in fact, accepted the proposals for a comprehensive settlement of the whole problem of the date gardens put forward by His Majesty's Government in 1936 [illegible] a copy was sent to the Treasury with Foreign Office letter of the 25th November, 1938. The Iraqi Government have, moreover, in fulfilment of the obligations which they thereby assumed, recently passed legislation writing off the outstanding claims in respect of arrears of direct taxation against the two sheikhs, they have taken steps to apply land settlement to the area in which the properties are situated, and they have asked for the secondment of a suitable British official to [illegible] the necessary land settlement operations (see Bagdad despatch of which a copy was sent to the Treasury with Foreign Office letter of the 3rd April).

10. A copy of this letter is being sent to the India Office.

I am, &c.

LACY BAGGALLAY

No. 162

[illegible]

E 1970 G] No. 163

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received May 14.)

(No. 150.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, May* 13, 1940

I REGRET to say that there has been noticeable deterioration in public opinion during the past few weeks. I therefore thought it desirable to convey serious warning to the Prime Minister this morning.

I told him that from many sources I had heard that anti-British feeling was spreading and that it seemed clear that this movement was being encouraged by certain sections of the press and by many silly or malicious people who failed to [illegible] propaganda [illegible] resulted [illegible] Mosul.

Some people even affected [illegible] which side won the war, despite the object lessons of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Denmark, Norway, Holland, Belgium and Luxemburg. If it were not for Great Britain, Iraq could hardly hope to remain on the map, while in association with us her future was most promising.

I urged that the Government should give stronger lead to public opinion by condemning German barbarity and emphasising the peaceable and steady progress that Iraq had enjoyed during the twenty [? years] of her close alliance with Great Britain, and I asked that an attempt should be made to improve the tone of the press by closer revision and control from the Press Department, quoting a number of instances of hostility and mischief-making from the *Istaqlal*.

I pointed out that in countries, including Egypt, there had been a tightening up of measures to prevent every kind of subversive activity, and it was for Iraq to take similar measures before it became too late.

The Prime Minister did not admit that public opinion had hitherto deteriorated, but he seemed impressed by the quotations from the *Istaqlal*, and he [illegible] should do more to guide and control public opinion.

He undertook personally to examine how best these two needs could be met.

At the same time, he said that he felt obliged to warn that the situation in Palestine and Syria was causing bitterness of feeling towards the Allies which the Government alone could not hope to eradicate. If only we could find a satisfactory solution of outstanding political problems of these two sister Arab countries, all would be well, he said.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 51 (for Middle East Intelligence Centre).)

E 1724 448 93] No. 164

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received May 16.)

(No. 197.)
My Lord, *Bagdad, May* 6, 1940

WITH reference to my despatch No. 160 of the 10th April, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that the parliamentary session, which began on the 1st November last, was prorogued by Royal Iradah on the 30th April. The session had been interrupted by an adjournment of two months from the 15th November to the 15th January, and its prorogation therefore came at the end of the statutory period of four months.

2. It has been a disturbed session, twice the Government have resigned and once political life in the country was severely shaken by the assassination of the Minister of Finance and the events that followed that crime. Nevertheless, a great deal of parliamentary work has been accomplished. Over fifty laws have been dealt with by the Chamber, and most of these have also been passed through the Senate. In addition to the budget the Bills passed by the Chamber include—

- A Civil Service Law
- A Property Tax Law (Bagdad despatch No. 170 E. of the 22nd April)
- An Emergency Tax Law (Bagdad despatch No. O.T. (A) 4 of the 2nd March)
- A Public Education Law (Bagdad despatch No. 454 of the 10th August 1939)
- A Law for the Improvement of Cotton Cultivation
- A Law for the Establishment of a Summer Hill Station
- A Rice Cultivation Law

3. No measures were presented to Parliament for the amendment of either the Organic Law or the Electoral Law, although constitutional and electoral reforms were at the head of the programme of Nuri Said's Administration.

4. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's representatives at Cairo and Tehran, to the Government of India and to the Combined Middle East Intelligence Centre, Cairo.

I have, &c.

BASIL NEWTON

E 2022 2022 93] No. 165

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received May 16.)

(No. 167.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, May* 16, 1940

My telegram No. 159.

Prime Minister has informed the adviser to Ministry of the Interior that he has instructed the Director General of Police to keep strict watch on Syrian and Palestinian refugees and has arranged to check undesirable activities of teachers. He and Nuri had, he said, also seen several of the principal Palestinian and Syrian [illegible] assurances that they would make no trouble in Iraq. Adviser hoped, therefore, that steps taken are adequate.

Prime Minister has furthermore given advice to all editors through Press Bureau to publish articles condemning German aggression and supporting Allied cause. He has, however, explained both to adviser and oriental secretary that he cannot himself give a lead to the public in this sense. He states, if he were to do so, Iraqis would mock him, and he even alleges that Nuri's attempts to do so were one of the reasons of his fall.

Although Palestine and Syria are an underlying cause of anti-British and anti French feeling, which would therefore be mitigated by any concessions possible, the main immediate causes for its emergence now are our withdrawal from Southern Norway and German successes in Holland. Entry of Italy into the war against the Allies would probably result in serious aggravation of the situation though it might also have a sobering effect on more responsible Iraqis.

I must warn His Majesty's Government that hangings or other severe sentences against the Arabs in Palestine or Syria [group omitted] which is rapidly spread by refugee agitators as well as by German wireless, is liable in such circumstances to act like a forced draught on a smouldering fire.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 54 (for Middle East Intelligence Centre), and Jerusalem, No. 26.)

E 1216 110 93. No. 166

The Treasury to the Foreign Office.—(Received May 17.)

Sir, [illegible] 1940.

I HAVE laid before the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty [illegible] Mr. Baggallay's letter of the 26th ultimo on the question of the ex[illegible] pledges given on behalf of His Majesty's Government in 1914 to Sheikh Mubarak of Koweit and Sheikh Khazal of Mohammerah by which they and their heirs and successors were promised tax free possession of the estates of the two sheikhs in what is now Iraq.

In reply, I am to request you to inform the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that my Lords give their formal sanction for the final settlement now [illegible] official approval of this department, and they authorise payment being made accordingly to a total of £45,914, as a charge to Sub head I of the vote for Diplomatic and Consular Services.

A copy of this letter is being sent to the India Office.

I am, &c.,

R. V. KINDERSLEY HOPKINS.

E 2010 2010 93] No. 167

Viscount Halifax to Sir P. Loraine (Rome).

(No. 397.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 18, 1940.*

IRAQI Government have asked that arrangements may be made for [illegible] of Iraqi Legation to leave with His Majesty's Embassy if necessary. Please bear this request in mind.

2. There can be no question of legation staying on in the event of war between this country and Italy and I should, in fact, prefer that they left with you. I assume that specific instructions would be sent to Iraqi representative regarding termination of his mission, but there might inevitably be some slight delay in their arrival. In that case, please do what you can to ensure that he leaves with you, on grounds of convenience in advance of instructions.

(Repeated to Baghdad, No. 140.)

E 2010 2010 93] No. 168

Sir P. Loraine to Viscount Halifax.—(Received May 22.)

(No. 616.)
(Telegraphic.) *Rome, May 21, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 397.

Situation has been explained to Iraqi Chargé d'Affaires, who requests that His Majesty's Government should, in view of length of time that telegrams from Baghdad take to get to Rome, persuade Iraqi Government to send him immediately definite instructions to the effect that if and when relations between His Majesty's Government and the Italian Government are broken off he should be authorised

(1) to inform the Italian Government that relations between Iraq and Italy are similarly broken, and (2) to request same facilities for evacuation of himself and his staff as those accorded to me. He is anxious that situation similar to that which arose in Berlin should not, if possible, occur here.

(Repeated to Baghdad, unnumbered.)

E 1726 817 65] No. 169

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received May 23.)

(No. 181.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, May 22, 1940.*

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs informed me on 21st May that Turkish Minister, acting on instructions from Angora, had enquired whether Iraqi Government had any confirmation of a report that, with the permission of the Iranian Government, 2,000 Russian troops in uniform, with German officers and a German engineer, were working on the road from Khoi through Dilman and Urumiyah to Iraqi frontier at the end of the Rowanduz road. Suggestion was that bridges were being improved and route being made fit for heavy mechanised transport.

2. Minister for Foreign Affairs suggested that Turks themselves were in best position to investigate truth of this report but promised to make enquiries.

(Repeated to Tehran, No. 23, and [illegible] Centre.)

E 1642 45 34] No. 170

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received May 23.)

(No. 183.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, May 22, 1940.*

MY telegram No. 29, Saving.

Iranian Minister has informed the Minister for Foreign Affairs that the views of the Shah are still awaited and that he has been instructed by the Iranian Minister for Foreign Affairs to endeavour to persuade the Iraqi Government to drop the plan as inopportune.

Minister for Foreign Affairs refused to accept such a proposal. He had pointed to large numbers of Germans in Tehran, believed to be spying and to the danger of their organising action against Iraq. Iraqi Government must take precautions to protect their own territory and the measures proposed were in no way directed against Iran and would not harm Iranian interests. Their regard for good relations had already been shown by the care they had taken to explain their intentions to the Iranian Government before acting.

Minister for Foreign Affairs told me that it appeared to him that the matter was not being considered on its merits, but only from the point of view of the Shah's probable reactions.

(Repeated to Tehran and Middle East Intelligence Centre, Saving.)

E 2663 220 93] No. 171

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received May 27.)

(No. 190.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, May 26, 1940.*

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs handed me a letter on 25th May dealing with the following two points:—

2. First is the desire of Iraqi Government to proceed at once with the plan to declare certain districts on the Iran frontier protected areas (see my telegram No. 183) closed to foreigners, in order to put a stop to propaganda and other harmful [group undecipherable] which are being carried on by enemy agents.

3. In a letter, and also verbally, Nuri Pasha has explained that the Iraqi Government feel fully justified in taking this measure in view of the present situation, and he states that Iranian Government have already established similar areas on their side of the frontier.

4. Iranian Government have, however, adopted an obstructive attitude towards this proposal and the Iraqi Government, foreseeing that, if it is carried out, difficulties may arise between the two Governments, desire to be informed of the views of His Majesty's Government.

5. The second is public feeling in Iraq concerning Palestine and the manner in which propaganda has been able to exploit that feeling. The conclusion is [illegible]ed that, as a complement to measures which are being taken by the Iraq[illegible]ment themselves to defeat enemy trickery, His Majesty's Government, and [illegible]possible the French Government as well, should issue a clear and unambiguous pronouncement guaranteeing immediately, or at least at the end of the war, the execution of promises already given for organisation of self government in these two countries.

[illegible] Such a pronouncement it is stated would not only facilitate the Iraqi [illegible] task of combating Fifth Column activities in Iraq, but would [illegible] doubt have a beneficial influence over the whole Middle East.

[illegible] The translation of the letter will be sent by bag.

6. Thirdly and orally, the Minister for Foreign Affairs discussed with me at the same time the possibility of obtaining Turkish co-operation against enemy action from the direction of Iran. His idea was, first, to take soundings and, if the result was favourable, to visit Angora to talk the matter over personally with the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs. I pointed out that in the Treaty of Mutual Assistance of 1939 between Turkey, France and Great Britain, Turkey had expressly declined any obligation to go to war with Russia, so that she could hardly be expected to approve of such an obligation on behalf of Iraq. Nuri Pasha thereupon explained that in the event of Italy entering the war against [illegible] would constitute an Allied *bloc* within which there should be as much co-operation as possible. He would like to ascertain what was in the mind of the Turkish Government and thought that their support in Tehran would be of value in dealing with the threat of hostile action by the many Germans now in Iran. He believed, for example, that the Turkish enquiry reported in my telegram No. 181 had been intended as a helpful warning. Comment follows.

Repeated to Tehran, No. 26, Cairo, No. 65 (for Middle East Intelligence Centre), and Angora, No. 2.)

(E 2010 2010 93) No. 172

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received May 27.)

(No. 191.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, May 26, 1940*

ROME telegram No. 616 to you.

I discussed the matter again with the Minister for Foreign Affairs on 25th May.

Minister for Foreign Affairs made it clear that the Cabinet were not prepared to take hypothetical decision to break with Italy in advance of the event arising to produce war between Italy and Great Britain. I urged therefore that Iraqi Government should at least authorise their legation to leave at the same time as the British Embassy. I pointed out that the departure of the chargé d'affaires and staff would not necessarily be a technical rupture of relations and was a less decisive step than a request to the Italian Minister to leave Iraq. Latter step could, on the other hand, be taken promptly so soon as the Cabinet resolved to break off diplomatic relations, but delays were likely to occur in communicating this resolution to their legation at Rome. Prior instructions to leave at the same time as British Embassy were therefore desirable.

Minister for Foreign Affairs had evidently thought that the detention of the [illegible] would [illegible] Iraq [illegible] would at the same time [illegible] would ensue, which would suit the Italian book and bring about doubt on the genuine intentions of the Iraqi Government to break off relations.

Minister for Foreign Affairs promised to consult his colleague further.

(Repeated to Rome, No. 3.)

(E 1642 45 34) No. 173.

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received May 28.)

(No. 192.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, May 28, 1940*

MY telegram No. 29, Saving, first paragraph.

Minister for Foreign Affairs informed me on 25th May that Iraqi Government had sent a formal request to Iranian Government to transfer to Baqubah the consulate now at Khanikin. Reasons given were that, as consul's business [illegible] point of view that this consulate, irrespective of all others in Iraq, should be at [illegible]

Minister for Foreign Affairs claimed that Iranian Government th[illegible] that Iranian Consulate at Khanikin had only been created to deal with pilgrim[illegible] pilgrims, no justification for its retention at Khanikin remained.

(Repeated to Tehran, No. 27.)

(E 2063 220 93) No. 174

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received May 28.)

(No. 193.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, May 26, 1940*

MY telegram No. 190.

Following is my comment on three points raised, divided into three parts.

(Part 1.)

Control over frontier with Iran seems important and urgent, but ma[illegible] they can get any help from Turkey, the Iraqi Government have not shown a disposition to invite British reinforcements. If, however, in general regards His Majesty's Government think it desirable to send them, the present enquiry provides an opportunity to raise the matter.

(Part 2.)

The issues of Palestine and Syria were [illegible] and might have been put in a more [illegible] [illegible] would [illegible] [illegible] Russia [illegible] well [illegible] of [? feeling] that in Pa[illegible] their own metaphor [illegible] though for this [illegible] the white paper [illegible] courage, [illegible] feel it all the more deeply because they themselves grew up [illegible] of genuine value in proportion to their extent, and their grant or denial wil[illegible]

have an important effect on our mutual relations for at least the period of the war [illegible] made before entry of Italy into the war.

The idea of consultation with the Turkish Government, although vague, has [illegible] of 1939). The Prime Minister also mentioned it briefly in the course of a long [illegible] points now officially raised.

I imagine that Iraqi Government are not likely to [illegible] conversations than good advice, but this might help to bri[illegible] Great Britain is their only real protection. Perhaps, too, as a gesture such a visit may have a certain value. I conjecture that the Minister for Foreign Affairs might wish later to visit Egypt, where no doubt the importance of Great Britain and the unimportance of Iraq would be further confirmed.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 68, Tehran, No. 28, and Angora, No. 3.)

E 1642/45/34] No. 175

Sir R. Bullard to Viscount Halifax.—(Received May 29.)

(No. 150.)
(I[illegible] ific.)

Tehran, May 29, 1940.

[BAGHDAD telegram No. 190.]

[illegible] up undecipherable] response to the representations from Iraq Chargé [illegible] Government eventually replied that, while this was within the right of Iraqi Government, it seemed to Iranian Government unnecessary. In conversation Minister for Foreign Affairs said that they feared it might provoke Russia to [illegible] action. On the subject of German activities, Minister for Foreign Affairs made usual reply about the perfect Iranian police.

([illegible] No. 31 [illegible] No. 5, and His Majesty's [illegible] Cairo (for Middle East Intelligence Centre), No. 24.)

E 1732/448/93] No. 176

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received May 29.)

(No. 221.)

Bagdad, May 20, 1940.

My Lord,

THE Cabinet formed by Rashid Ali at the beginning of April has now [illegible] six weeks, and it may be useful to review briefly [illegible] its present position.

2. [illegible] of appointment [illegible] court set up in the Rashid (Hinaidi) Cantonment close to Bagdad by his predecessor in May 1939 and obtained a Royal reprieve for Sabih Naib, who, in peculiar circumstances, had been sentenced by this court for a minor misdemeanour after having been acquitted of a charge of being an accessory to the murder of the late Rustam Haidar, Minister of Finance. He is credited with a desire to release also Hikmat Sulaiman, another prominent Iraqi politician, who was convicted and sentenced to five years' imprisonment for conspiracy against the State by the same court in March 1939. In this desire he is said to be supported by Naji Shaukat and Naji Suwaidi, but opposed by Nuri Said and Taha [illegible] Hashimi, and stories are frequently heard of an impending split in the Cabinet over this dispute. Nevertheless, the Cabinet continues to present an apparently solid front to the country, and much more is said by the gossips about the internal differences in the Cabinet than by the Ministers themselves.

3. Another story which is freely told by those who pretend to inside knowledge of the Cabinet is that from the beginning there has been an understanding between Rashid Ali and Naji Suwaidi [illegible] Nuri Said out of the Government and to eliminate him from politics by sending him

as Minister to London. If any attempt has, in fact, been made to give effect [illegible] so far been able to resist it.

4. On taking office the Prime Minister declared that the programme of his Cabinet did not differ in any essentials from that of Nuri Said's Cabinet, and during the short period that remained of the current session of Parliament he was content to put through the legislation already prepared by the late Government, and his own Cabinet did not themselves introduce any important measures. Similarly, in his personal talks with me, and no doubt on account of what he thought might be his reputation as an ardent nationalist, Rashid Ali has been at pains to assure me that he aimed at no change of attitude towards Great Britain or the Anglo-Iraqi Alliance, and intended to continue his [illegible] between Iraq and Great Britain. At the same time he has intimated that in order to retain public confidence his Government would have to encourage and lead the patriotism of the younger generation, and show a readiness to work [illegible] His intentions have been, I think, genuine, but he has little sense of reality and may fail to see the danger to Iraq of the purely emotional patriotism, born of chimerical dreams divorced from fact, which is cultivated among the youth of Iraq to-day.

5. Since Rashid Ali took office there has been a noticeable and somewhat disturbing movement towards more extreme views in public opinion, as I felt bound to warn him the other day (my telegram No. 159 of 13th May). The fanaticism and propaganda of the numerous Palestinian and Syrian political refugees have been gaining influence, and anti-British sentiments are everywhere [illegible] than internal causes, but a man with greater practical experience of the world or with a quicker appreciation of the significance of current events would have done more than he has to stem the tide. Public feeling in this country towards Great Britain has been profoundly impressed by recent developments in the war. The withdrawal from Southern Norway, the revelation of our numerical inferiority to our enemies in the air which came in the House of Commons debate on the Norwegian campaign, and, during the last week, the overrunning of Holland and Belgium by the German army, are events that have severely shaken confidence in the certainty of an Allied victory. The news of these [illegible] in Arabic, while the best of those who are jealous of our position, or hate us for our policy in Palestine and the French for their policy in Syria, have worked ceaselessly to turn popular feeling against the Allied cause. In this they have been greatly helped by the news that has continued to arrive of heavy sentences inflicted on Arabs by the military courts in Palestine and Syria. Each new batch of sentences provides fresh inflammatory material with which to kindle fires of hatred against Britain and France.

6. [illegible] opinion, and I have urged repeatedly the need for the Government to give a lead which would rally those who still see where Iraq's interests really lie, and check [illegible] destroy all that has been achieved in this country during the last twenty years. [illegible] of the Interior and the oriental secretary that it is out of the question for him [illegible] public opinion to the side of the Allies. He says that Nuri Pasha failed in this, [illegible] and weaken his authority without making any impression on public opinion unless, so he implies, he could at the same time declare the establishment of an agreed policy between the Allies and the Arabs for the realisation of Arab ideals. In this connexion I am sending home separately a copy of a letter from the British adviser to the Ministry of the Interior in my despatch No. 223 of the 20th May. Nuri Said, I am told, has tried to persuade Rashid Ali to give a reasonable and reassuring lead to public opinion, but without success.

7. Nevertheless, I learn that the Prime Minister has given orders to the police to keep a close watch on the activities of the Palestinian and Syrian refugees and other mischief-makers, and also to issue through the Press Bureau a directive to newspaper editors to publish articles condemning German aggression on small countries. The latter instructions have made no considerable impression on public opinion as yet. With few exceptions the press articles have been lukewarm in their condemnation of Germany's brutal attacks on her weaker [illegible]bours, and, so far as I can judge from the reports that reach me, public opinion is still growing more pro-German and anti-British. Owing to the strong instinct of the average Iraqi to seek the winning side, this development is likely to continue until the war news becomes more favourable.

8. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's representatives at Cairo and Tehran, to the Government of India and to the Combined Middle East Intelligence Centre, Cairo.

I have, &c.
BASIL NEWTON.

E 1642/45/34 No. 177

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received June 1.)

(No. 204.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, May 31, 1940.*

My telegram No. 193.

In the discussion of possibilities once more of danger from Iranian front Minister for Foreign Affairs expressed the view, which is endorsed by British Military Mission, that the Iraqi army could successfully resist any purely Iranian [illegible]

Minister for Foreign Affairs went on to say that, if the Germans, Russians or Italians were involved, in conjunction perhaps with Fifth Column, position of Iraq would obviously be more difficult.

Adequate steps were being taken to control the internal activities. Quite privately he was considering, therefore, whether as an additional precaution some [illegible] tively, as though he were thinking aloud, and doubted whether his colleagues would agree.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 69 (please pass copy to Middle East Intelligence Centre).)

E 2095/2022/93 No. 178

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received June 4.)

(No. 235.)
My Lord, *Baghdad, May 27, 1940.*

THE Prime Minister dined with me as my only guest on the 24th May, and after dinner discussed with me the present internal situation in Iraq.

2. He began by telling me that the public attitude towards the war had been [illegible]cently improved by the measures which the Government had taken, and that [illegible] High Defence Council, at which it had been decided that an ordinance should be issued giving wide powers to the Minister of the Interior to deal firmly with [illegible]sons believed to be engaged in activities prejudicial to the welfare of the [illegible] be declared. Rashid Ali said that he had also talked with a number of tribal leaders from different parts of the country, and had sent them home with material with which to combat pro-Nazi talk.

3. I thanked his Excellency for the action already taken, the articles inspired in the press, the banning of demonstrations and all public gatherings, and for the further measures to which he was now about to give effect, but said that, to my regret, I was not able to agree with his view that all was now well. A [illegible] especially in such places as Mosul, Kirkuk and Basra.

4. Information that I had received from these places showed that anti-British agitation was gaining rather than losing strength, and that for want of

instructions from the Government the local mutasarrifs and other senior officials were taking no action either to check that agitation or to give an alternative lead to public opinion. I knew that orders had been given that no demonstrations were to be allowed, but this was not in itself enough. In order to avoid the danger of disorders it was essential that in the provinces as well as in Baghdad the Government [illegible] to the people to stand solidly behind them in their policy of close collaboration with Great Britain. I also [illegible] like all other Governments, to take special powers to deal with treachery and treason within the country, it was almost equally important that they should inform the people of what they were doing and of the purpose for which these special powers would be used. At present the people in most parts of the country were still without a clear lead on many vital points concerning Iraq's position in the war, and for want of that lead and for want of a knowledge of the measures that the Government were taking to maintain order, public opinion was in a dangerous state of nervous uncertainty. Much of this would be dispelled if the Government would tell the people at once of their intention to govern firmly and to deal severely with traitors and intriguers.

5. The Prime Minister said that he agreed with all that I had said but felt obliged to remind me of a point that he had often made before. No matter what steps were taken by the Government to check malicious propaganda and to give a wholesome lead to public opinion, no real or lasting successes could be achieved in the development of a strong pro-British sentiment among the people unless the problem of Palestine was satisfactorily solved. No appeal to the people to rally to the Anglo-Iraqi Alliance would obtain a wide response unless it was coupled with a declaration of the removal of Arab grievances in Palestine.

6. I said that I could not altogether agree with His Excellency's view. It seemed to me that in Iraq the agitation about Palestine was carried on not so [illegible] welfare and whose sole object was to cultivate extraneous interests in Palestine. As regards a solution of the Palestine question, His Majesty's Government had already made a great [illegible] with the help of the representa[illegible] the principal Arab States to lay down a policy that would safeguard Arab rights and interests, and that policy, as His Excellency knew, had been published in the white paper of May 1939. The application of the white paper policy had much improved the situation in Palestine, where the Arabs had on the whole accepted it, and it was therefore surprising that the bitterness in Iraq should have increased. This state of affairs suggested that the agitation in Iraq was largely artificial and due mainly to the constant efforts of the Palestinian refugees, to whom I had already referred.

7. The Prime Minister said that he was sorry he could not agree with me. He did not think that there had been any real change in the attitude of the Arabs of Palestine towards the white paper, and the fact that hundreds of Palestinian Arabs were still either in prison or in exile showed that the situation there was still far from normal. He maintained that agitation in Iraq about Palestine was not artificial. Ever since the end of the last war, long before any refugees had come to Iraq, whenever the Arabs of Palestine had been in difficulties there had always been sympathetic reactions in Iraq. The Arabs of Iraq were bound to those of Palestine by ties of blood, religion and culture. Iraqi interest in the Arabs of Palestine came from the heart and needed no artificial stimulus. He went on to say that though the white paper had not solved the problem of Palestine it had provided a basis for a solution. One or two small concessions and clarifications were all that was needed to make it acceptable to the Arabs, and it was his hope that before long it would be possible for him to enter into conversations with a view to studying these points and reaching agreement concerning them. If that could be done Great Britain would find the Arabs standing firmly at her side in the struggle against Germany. I drew his attention to the fact that conversations were now taking place in London, but he replied that they dealt only with [illegible] as an amnesty.

8. The Prime Minister then turned to the danger of enemy action based in Persia, referring, in particular, to the presence of over 2,000 Germans in and about Tehran, and to the reports which the Turkish Government had received (see my telegram No. 181) that the Russians were improving roads in North-West Persia. He said that the Iraqi Government were much concerned lest enemy

action should be taken either openly or through fifth column activities from bases [illegible] British reinforcements, but he went on to say that Nuri Pasha had it in mind [illegible] talk to me about the possible advantages of seeking Turkish co-operation to [illegible] danger. I said that I should, of course, be glad to discuss this [illegible] the Minister for Foreign Affairs, but pointed out that as Turkey, [illegible] of Mutual Assistance with France and Great Britain, had expressly [illegible] she would take no action likely to involve her in armed conflict with the Soviet Government, it was unlikely that she would commit herself to giving any armed assistance to Iraq against Russian aggression. The outcome of my talk with the Minister for Foreign Affairs on this point has been reported separately in my telegram No. 190.

9. I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's representatives at Cairo and Tehran, to the Government of India, the Combined Middle East Intelligence Centre, and to His Majesty's Consuls at Basra and Mosul.

I have &c.

BASIL NEWTON

E 1642/46/34 — **No. 179**

Viscount Halifax to Sir B. Newton (Baghdad)

(No. 188.)
(Telegraphic.) — *Foreign Office, June 5, 1940*

YOUR telegram No. 192 [of 28th May] and Tehran telegram No. 150 [of 20th May: Restrictions on foreigners in Iraqi frontier areas and removal of [illegible] from Khanaqin]

[illegible] early danger from German activities of one kind or another in [illegible] view of the experience of other countries and the fact that the [illegible] in Iraq itself is also in many respects unsatisfactory, I do not see that His Majesty's Government can advise the Iraqi Government to desist from what seem to be reasonable and proper measures in a time of emergency, however irritated the Iranian Government may be by these measures.

2. You may therefore inform Minister for Foreign Affairs that I see no reason why Iraqi Government should not proceed with their plans for frontier areas, but, no matter what attitude the Iranian Government may adopt, should continue to show patience in explaining these measures and motives behind them to that Government. They should also do their utmost in matters of detail to avoid causing Iranian interests any unnecessary trouble so far as this is consistent with the attainment of their general objective.

3. The same considerations apply generally to the removal of the [illegible] Consulate from Khanaqin. Now that the Iraqi Government have sent a formal request for transfer of consulate, they had better see the matter through, but here, again, they should conduct all discussions with the Iranian Government as courteously and patiently as possible.

4. Suggestion as to possible despatch of troops to Iraq is still under con[illegible] I do not think that it need be affected by measures now in contemplation.

(Repeated to Tehran, No. 110.)

E 2063/220/93 — **No. 180**

Viscount Halifax to Sir B. Newton (Baghdad)

(No. 189.)
(Telegraphic.) — *Foreign Office, June 5, 1940*

YOUR telegram No. 193 [of 27th May], part 3: [Turco-Iraqi relations.]

Although I agree that General Nuri would probably not obtain more than good advice from Turkish Government, I do not think that His Majesty's Government should appear in light of discouraging his desire to consult them. Subject, therefore, to your views and those of His Majesty's Ambassador at Angora, you may reply to General Nuri on the following lines:

His Majesty's Government agree with his idea of keeping in touch with Turkish Government regarding developments in Iran, where German activities

are evidently serious. The evidence which His Majesty's Government possess does not, however, show that Iranian Government are themselves encouraging these activities. On the contrary His Majesty's Government think they are still determined to maintain their neutrality if they possibly can. In the circumstances, care should be taken to avoid any steps which might appear to be directed against the Iranian Government as such. Moreover, it is possible that in view of their long-standing friendship with the Iranian Government, the Turkish Government may feel that the most useful rôle they can play will be to continue the efforts which they have no doubt already been making to open the eyes of the Iranian Government to the dangers of Fifth Column activities in Iran.

(Repeated to Tehran, No. 111; Cairo, No. 389, and Angora, No. 305.)

E 1642/46/34 — **No. 181**

Sir R. Bullard to Viscount Halifax.—(Received June 6.)

(No. 185.)
(Telegraphic.) — *Tehran, June 6, 1940*

YOUR telegram No. 188 to Baghdad.

According to my Iraqi colleague, Iranian Government fear that these measures may provoke Russia to take action in Iran. I consider that these fears cannot be dismissed as groundless.

See immediately following telegram.

(Repeated to Baghdad, No. 39.)

E 1642/46/34 — **No. 182**

Sir R. Bullard to Viscount Halifax.—(Received June 6.)

(No. 184.)
(Telegraphic.) — *Tehran, June 6, 1940*

MY immediately preceding telegram.

My Iraqi colleague is telegraphing to his Government about these measures [illegible] Foreign Affairs begged that use of such terms as "prohibited area" might be avoided, and urged necessary control could be secured without such proclamation. He was particularly upset by the news received from Iranian Minister at Baghdad that Iraqi Government had requested removal of Iranian Consul from Khanaqin to Baquba. Minister said that these measures would create difficulties with [illegible] and it was evident to the chargé d'affaires that he fears Russia may declare them to be preliminary to imperialist [? war] on Iran and apply article 6 of treaty of 1921. Minister for Foreign Affairs said he would like to visit Baghdad to discuss these problems.

2. Chargé d'affaires, though diffident about opposing measures approved by his Government, is suggesting:—

(a) Iraq should try to meet the views of Iranian Government about prohibited area at Khanaqin, especially as latter see no objection to the appointment of military officer as Governor, and

(b) Iranian Consulate should if possible be left at Khanaqin, but Iranian Government requested to change incumbent.

He will argue that we should avoid at this juncture any step not absolutely essential which might embarrass Iranian Government in their relations with Russia or Germany, and should try to support Iranian Government, which is showing signs, however feeble, of a desire to grapple with German problem in this country.

3. I am in full agreement with chargé d'affaires as to necessity to support Iranian Government as far as possible. I would add that he is sensible and level-headed, pro-British and most helpful as a colleague.

(Repeated to Baghdad, No. 40.)

E 2063 220 93] No. 183

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax. (Received June 7.)

(No. 224.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, June 5, 1940*

MY telegram No. 190, paragraph 8.

Minister for Foreign Affairs called this morning to discuss position of Turkey.

2. He said that he distrusted Turks, who were quite capable of changing an apparently established policy as quickly as Germans had done in August. He seemed to have no reason for doubting Turkish intention to fulfil article 2 of treaty of 1939 but said that failure or delay on her part in doing so would be ominous for Iraq. It would not mean that Turkey wished to keep her hands free to hold Russia in check, but that she intended in due course to exploit whatever opportunities war might offer. He was convinced that Turkey had an understanding with Iran and mentioned that some two months ago a map had been discovered amongst Turkish elements in Kirkuk assigning most likely vilayet of Iraq to Turkey, and remains to Iran. Same map had been found again a few days ago amongst Persian and Shiah elements in Khadimain near Bagdad.

3. Minister for Foreign Affairs went on to say that if Turkey hesitated in the event of Italian entry into war, danger on Iran frontier would be increased and precautions all the more necessary. It would be essential also to rally all resources material and moral of the country behind Government and Allies, and for this purpose it would be very helpful to have assurances for which he had asked in regard to Palestine and Syria. Here I stressed that it would not be Great Britain and France who were asking for Iraqi or Arab help, but that the boot was on the other leg and that Iraqi Government would do well to make this [illegible] made to realise that interests of Palestine and Syria would not be served by extinction of Iraq or by failure of Iraqis and Iraqi Government to do their duty.

4. It is of course an Iraqi characteristic to indulge in wild and puerile speculations and vulgar fears which may indeed sometimes have a sobering effect and make Iraqis more appreciative of British alliance. From his personal experience of Turks Nuri Pasha no doubt hopes to be able to penetrate Turkish designs at discussions [? in which] he wishes official notification of engagement.

5. I should be glad of any observations with which I can be furnished.

(Repeated to Angora, No. 5, Cairo, No. 16, Saving (for Middle East Intelligence Centre), Government of India, No. 4, Saving.)

E 2063 220 93] No. 184

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received June 7.)

(No. 233.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, June 7, 1940*

YOUR telegram No. 189.

Endemic anxiety lest there should be an understanding between Great Britain, France and Turkey for retrocession to Turkey of some of her lost eastern empire has been strengthened recently by visit of Turkish military mission, group [illegible] persistent pan-Arab agitation may be driving France and Great Britain to throw over Arabs.

2. I have detected some of these suspicions even in high political quarters, and I feel that they will be strengthened if we discourage Nuri Pasha from carrying out his plan for consulting with Turks. [! I told] [! Foreign Minister] [illegible] Nuri Pasha that you were generally well disposed towards his project, though, for obvious reasons, you wished to hear the views of His Majesty's Ambassador at Angora before you gave final opinion.

(Repeated to Angora, No. 6, Tehran, No. 57, and Cairo, No. 77.)

E 1642 45 34] No. 185

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received June 8.)

(No. 235.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, June 7, 1940*

Your Repeated telegram No. 125 and Tehran telegram No. 164.

I explained position to Minister for Foreign Affairs this morning. He suggested that possible way of dealing with Khanikin district would be:—

(1) To leave Iran Consulate, including present incumbent, there, but, in accordance with general practice to make mutessarif at Baquba only Iraqi official authorised to have official relations with consul.

(2) To appoint a military officer to be kaimakam, and to give him powers under national security ordinance instead of under [illegible] concerning prohibitive zones.

In this way consulate would remain, term "prohibited area" would not be [illegible] for Khanikin and main Iranian objections would be met.

(Repeated to Tehran, No. 38.)

E 2128 2022 93] No. 186

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received June 13.)

(No. 254.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, June 13, 1940*

In course of routine audience 13th June I mentioned to the Regent my disappointment at the delay in deciding to break off diplomatic relations between Italy and Iraq. I said that I had been [group undecypherable] that this decision would be taken, and thought it all the more pitiful that the Iraqi Government should apparently merely wait on the Egyptian Government and fail to get credit for taking the inevitable decision sooner rather than later.

The Regent explained that members of the Cabinet simply could not make up their minds. We could, however, rely on him to use his influence to see that they took the right course, and he authorised me to convey this assurance to you in confidence. He is contaminated [*sic*] and not as yet a strong c[illegible] I am sure that he is thoroughly well disposed and means what he say.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 87.)

E 2128 2022 93] No. 187

Viscount Halifax to Sir B. Newton (Bagdad).

(No. 225.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June 16, 1940.*

YOUR telegrams Nos. 254 and 260 [of 13th and 14th June: Iraq and Italy.]

Delay in breaking off relations with Italy causes me great concern. Without shadow of justification Italian Government have declared war on His Majesty's Government. Designs of Italian Government on all Arab countries can be judged from their past [illegible] Only the British alliance protects Iraq from these ambitions, and it should not be necessary for His Majesty's Government to remind Iraqi Government that not only their obligations to their ally, but also the most elementary principles of self interest make it beyond doubt essential that they should co-operate to the fullest possible extent against this menace.

2. His Majesty's Government have not insisted, though they might be well within their rights in doing so, that Iraqi Government should declare war on Germany or Italy if they are satisfied that they can fulfil their obligations to His Majesty's Government without doing so. They do, however, consider it essential that Iraqi Government should sever all relations with Italian Government and [illegible] and they earnestly hope that there will be no further delay in taking this step. Egyptian Government decided on 12th June to break off diplomatic relations with Italy.

[illegible] Please press Iraqi Government accordingly, if they have not already taken action.

4. You may at your discretion point out that having broken off relations with Germany, hesitation of Iraqi Government to take same step with Italy is illogical and dangerous.

5. You should take a suitable opportunity of thanking the Regent for his efforts, which I greatly appreciate.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 465 (for M.E.I.C.).)

E 2128/2022/93] No. 188

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received June 18.)

(No. 265.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, June 18, 1940*

YOUR telegram No. 225.

On Saturday I received a message from the Prime Minister that the question of rupture of relations with Italy was still under discussion [illegible] was opposed to [illegible] Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Prime Minister showed that since then the position has changed for worse.

On the receipt of your telegram under reference I at once saw Minister for Foreign Affairs and read out to him first and second paragraphs. He thereupon [illegible] at once, but two of his colleagues were against rupture, and the Prime Minister by not committing himself on that question had taken the line that if two Ministers [illegible] had thought it best to try somehow to avoid resignation of the Cabinet, and a resolution had been drawn up and was to be submitted to the Regent to the effect that relations with Italy should be broken off if and when necessary. Minister for Foreign Affairs admitted that this meant nothing, but said that it was better than a resolution against a rupture, as it would not embarrass successors if the present Cabinet resigned. Minister for Foreign Affairs foreshadowed early request from the Regent to discuss the situation with me.

Minister for Foreign Affairs would not tell me why certain Ministers (including, no doubt, Naji Shaukat), were opposed to a rupture with Italy, but I suspect main reasons are—

1. That they think such a step unnecessary and dangerous to Iraq.
2. That they have been alarmed by Turkish [group undecypherable] failure to declare war on Italy.
3. Army, too, may have expressed objections to any decision which might precipitate Italian aggression.

My subsequent conversation with Prime Minister was wholly unsatisfactory. I read the relevant parts of your telegram in English and had the main points repeated and stressed in [group omitted]. Prime Minister while assuring me profusely that Iraqi Government were genuinely attached to Allies and wished to discharge faithfully all treaty obligations, maintained a strong objection to immediate severance of relations on grounds that—

a) It would be of no practical help to Britain outside Iraq.
b) That [illegible] public feeling against both Great Britain and Iraqi Government themselves.

I replied to (*a*) that His Majesty's Government had already decided that it was essential that Iraqi Government should sever all relations with the Italian Government, and then after reminding him of improvements in internal situation which the recent firm action of the Government had produced, I pointed out with regard to (*b*) that it was not a firm decision and a clear lead, but vacillation which would cause a deterioration in public feeling.

The Prime Minister adhered to his attitude as to (*b*) but said he would discuss [group undecypherable] with his colleagues information which I had given [group undecypherable] of views of His Majesty's Government. I fear the Prime Minister will remain difficult to move unless he can be convinced that indecision will have more serious consequences than decision and if convinced of this, he may resign rather than accept a disagreeable responsibility.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 91, and Delhi, No. 33.)

E 2128/2022/93] No. 189

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received June 18.)

(No. 266.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, June 17, 1940*

MY telegram No. 265.

I discussed the situation with Taufiq Suwaidi this evening and informed him of the views of His Majesty's Government. He has influence with his father, the Minister of Finance, and with Jamal Madfai and generally in political circles, and he showed full knowledge of what is going on.

2. He [illegible] was that rupture with Italy would do little good to Britain and might involve Iraq unnecessarily in difficulties. It had not been known that His Majesty's Government attached so much importance to the severance of relations by Iraq with Italy, and he felt sure that when the views of His Majesty's Government were explained [illegible] would do what Britain expected of them, though one or two days might be needed. He said that he would make it his business to acquaint his friends with the information I had given him.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 92 (for Middle East Intelligence Centre).)

E 2128/2022/93] No. 190

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received June 19.)

(No. 271.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, June 18, 1940*

MY telegram No. 265.

The Regent invited me to an audience this morning, when I gave him your message by which he was much pleased. His Highness explained, however, that the Prime Minister had given him to understand that if immediate severance of diplomatic relations with Italy were insisted upon there might be four resignations from the Government. One would be that of the Prime Minister, although the Prime Minister had evaded saying whether he himself was for or against a severance. His Highness thought it would, therefore, be a mistake to force the issue. I told the Regent that when I had seen the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Prime Minister yesterday morning, I had not been aware of the full gravity of the news from France. I said that it would be mistake to wish to wait until the resulting situation had become clearer, and there could be no doubt—as for me there never had been—that Great Britain and the British Commonwealth would continue the fight with all the greater vigour. After a brief interval, however, severance ought to be effected without further delay, and I trusted without resignations on such an issue.

The Regent's parting words were: "I assure your Excellency that I will do my best."

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 93 (for Middle East [illegible] Delhi, No. 36.)

E 2126 2022 93] No. 191

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received June 19.)

(No. 272.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, June 18, 1940.*

MY telegram No. 271.

In speaking to the British Adviser to the Ministry of Interior this morning Prime Minister (who is also Minister of Interior) evidently wished to convey the impression to Edmonds that he had it in mind to break off relations with Italy, but was not prepared to force the pace. Mr. Edmonds has also told me that after some delay and inefficiency Italians are being interned or well supervised, and he understands that a careful watch is also being maintained in Italian Legation. For that and other reasons he believes that rupture will come before long and without resignation of present Prime Minister.

While our reverses in Norway, Holland and Belgium gave rise to *Schadenfreude* and anti-British agitation, Mr. Edmonds agrees with my impression that the gravity of the latest news has, so far as it is at present discernible, had a sobering effect.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 94 (for M.E.I.C.), and India, No. 37.)

E 2170 2170 89] No. 192

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received June 21.)

(No. 281.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, June 21, 1940.*

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs informed me yesterday evening that he and Naji Shaukat would leave most likely on 22nd June and arrive at Angora on 24th June. He said that their present plan was to return by first train after 26th June. The purpose of the visit was to examine the possibility of treaty [illegible] Iranians and to sound Turks about their attitude towards Italy and future of Syria.

2. Minister for Foreign Affairs undertook to get into touch with His Majesty's Ambassador before doing anything else.

(Repeated to Angora, No. 13, Tehran, No. 44, and Cairo, No. 100 (for Middle East Intelligence).)

E 2170 2170 89] No. 193

Sir H. Knatchbull-Hugessen to Viscount Halifax.—(Received June 23.)

(No. 62.)
(Telegraphic.) *Angora, June 23, 1940.*

SIR, IN MY [illegible] No. 28 [illegible] ng else and if your [illegible] the line that I have [illegible] has been secured.

2. But there are peculiar factors as regards Syria and Lebanon which distinguish them from other French overseas territories. The mandate and unratified Franco-Syrian Treaty make the French position less secure, and it is, I suppose, possible that the local Syrian and Lebanon Governments may try to take

over and proclaim termination of mandate. I should propose the argument that considerations in paragraph 1 would apply equally. In casting off French [illegible]

3. Nevertheless, Nuri may advocate maximum denunciation of the mandate as a step to the Arabic Federation mentioned in Newton's telegram No. 280.

4. It would appear important to give him accurate information as to the intentions of the French in Syria, *e.g.*, on lines of your telegram No. 484, paragraph 1. May I do so?

(Repeated to Cairo, Bagdad and Beirut.)

E 2170 2170 89] No. 194

Viscount Halifax to Sir H. Knatchbull-Hugessen (Angora).

(No. 498.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June 24, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 613 [of 22nd June] and Bagdad telegram No. 281 [of 21st June]: visit of Iraqi Ministers to Angora.

Please take earliest possible opportunity of speaking to General Nuri in [illegible] Syria.

2. If he raises question of relations with Iran you can but refer him to message which he has already received (see my telegram No. 189 to Bagdad [of 5th June]), although there have been signs since then that Iranian Government is becoming increasingly hypnotised by Soviet [illegible]

3. Without knowing what sort of treaty with Turkey he has in mind it is difficult to give you any clear line. You should, however, bear in mind that His Majesty's Government attach great importance to Iraq breaking off relations with Italy as soon as possible, whatever Turkey, whose circumstances are different, may do. Any action by Iraqi Government which would make their decision dependent upon that of Turkish Government would therefore be unwelcome.

4. I can understand anxiety of Iraqi Government in present [illegible] to seek additional support from Turkish Government. General Nuri [illegible] high price for assistance. Revival of Turkish domination over any part of Arab [illegible]

5. [illegible] Germany or Italy. There may be many Arabs who would regard it as a greater evil. I assume, therefore, that General Nuri will not open the door to Turkish penetration in advance of any imperious military necessity. If French authorities in Syria are as good as their word this, fortunately, does not yet exist. This emphasises vital necessity of bolstering up their position, whatever grievances Arabs may have had against French policy in the past.

(Repeated to Bagdad, No. 254, and Cairo, No. 592.)

E 2015 G] No. 195

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received June 26.)

(No. 296. Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.) (*Extract.*) *Bagdad, June 25, 1940.*

DURING three hours' interview yesterday with the Prime Minister, most of which was [illegible] devoted to] the question of breaking off relations with Italy, I used the arguments outlined in your telegram under reference and all others I could muster. I made it clear that the necessity for the rupture was open to no doubt and that it only remained [group undecipherable] decide when this step should be taken.

2. In spite of strong pressure, the Prime Minister remained obdurate. Against my refusal to accept his assertions he maintained that, owing to measures [illegible] bound under the treaty to sever relations with Italy. He said he was distressed

not to be able to meet the wishes of His Majesty's Government, but he was sincerely convinced that to break with Italy would do harm to the interests both of Britain and Iraq. It is possible that on further reflection he may change his mind but I had the impression that he would sooner resign.

3. While it may be a pity that he would resign on such an issue, he has shown himself so far to be a poor leader of his country at this juncture, and he has the reputation of being treacherous. While I would not trust him, I cannot from my own experience say more than that he has shown himself to be irresolute and yet prepared to exploit the grave dangers confronting the whole future of Iraq, Palestine, Syria and the Arabic world in order to extort concessions of doubtful advantage for Palestine and Syria and of more than doubtful advantage for Iraq. It was only after I had brought great and continuous pressure to bear that he would take adequate steps to deal with dangerous anti-British agitation which coincided with the early part of the German offensive. He even affected at first to deny that there was such an agitation. When [I unsuccessfully] on 11th June I first pressed him hard to break off relations with Italy, he could probably have secured general approval for this [illegible] A decision on his part seems more remote than before. Although this indefinite postponement seems due to timidity it will be remembered that it was he, although not then in the Government, who was largely responsible for the failure to declare war on Germany. While such a man may be dangerous out of office he may be more so as Prime Minister.

4. I am inclined, therefore, to suggest that favours to Iraq, including any [illegible] withheld until it can be seen whether they might not be better made to some successor willing to work in more whole-hearted collaboration with His Majesty's Government.

* * * * * *

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 107 (pass to Middle East Intelligence Centre).)

E 2128 2022 93] No. 198.

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received June 26.)

(No. 397.)
(Telegraphic.)

Baghdad, June 25, 1940.

I INFORMED the Regent, 25th June, that His Majesty's Government agreed with his [illegible] little if this would enable a decision to be taken [? by the] united Government. Unfortunately my long conversation with the Prime Minister on 24th June had not indicated much progress: indeed, almost the reverse.

2. His Royal Highness seemed to think that the Prime Minister might yet bring himself to take the decision even though others might resign. He gave me to understand that he was willing [? in any case] to force the issue himself and that on hearing from me that His Majesty's Government felt that the step should no longer be postponed, he would insist on it with the Prime Minister after an [illegible] from His Majesty's Government. I said that you would be greatly encouraged [illegible] Government longer to make up their minds than you would have otherwise felt possible.

3. The Regent seemed, however, to have no definite ideas in regard to the formation of an alternative Government and feared that Nuri Pasha might have too many enemies to become Prime Minister. I suggest that Opposition leaders should, if possible, be brought into any new Government to form a united coalition during the present emergency.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 108 (please pass copy to Middle East Intelligence Centre).)

E 2095 2022 93] No. 197.

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received June 26.)

(No. 266.)
My Lord,

Baghdad, June 19, 1940.

WITH [illegible] of your No. 285 of 27 May [illegible]

2. I [illegible] under its provision to mutessarifs in Baghdad, Mosul, Basra, Kirkuk and Kerbala has made it clear that the central authorities expect their provincial officials to deal firmly with any activities which threaten to disturb public peace and order.

3. His Majesty's Consul at Mosul reports that the atmosphere there is now less tense and that the mutessarif is determined to keep the situation well in hand. Police in plain clothes frequent the cafés and pounce on rumour mongers [illegible] His Majesty's Consul at Basra.

4. [illegible] to keep the tone of the press quiet. Disturbing head lines have been discouraged, and the leaders in the *Istiqlal* and other extreme Nationalist papers are showing less malice and more readiness to support the Allied cause.

5. For postal censorship the Iraqi Government have asked for two British experts to be sent from Egypt, and the Public Prosecutor has been personally active in censoring dubious press matter.

6. By making free use of suitable extracts from despatches from other posts giving details of Fifth Column methods of sabotage and murder elsewhere, I have, I think, to some extent brought home to members of the Government and to others the need for special precautions against the danger of similar activities in Iraq. I have been assured that the danger is appreciated, that mischief makers and dangerous individuals are already kept under observation, and that steps are being taken to intern suspected Iraqis and to expel or intern undesirable foreign residents. Difficulties have arisen, however, over accommodation, which should of course be of a suitable nature to prevent any justifiable complaints. It is also difficult to bring the authorities to take action against German women who are married to Iraqis and against Jewish doctors of German or Austrian origin [illegible] politically active. Many of the latter have staunch friends among patients whom they have successfully treated.

7. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's representatives at Cairo and Tehran, to His Majesty's Consuls at Basra and Mosul, to the Government of India, and to the Combined Middle East Intelligence Centre.

I have, &c.
BASIL NEWTON.

(E 2198 203 93] No. 198.

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received June 29.)

(No. 271 E.)
My Lord,

Baghdad, June 10, 1940.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 480 E. of the 25th August last, I have the honour to transmit herewith a summary of the Iraqi budget estimates for the financial year 1940-41 together with comparative figures for the year 1939-40. The 1940-41 figures have been taken from the Budget Law No. 31 of 1940, a translation of which will be forwarded when it is published in the English version of the *Official Gazette*.

2. When the 1940-41 budget estimates were first submitted to Parliament at the end of February, expenditure was placed at I.D. 6,538,380 and ordinary [illegible] 47,[illegible]00, three new taxes were hurriedly approved by Parliament—the Excess Profits Tax, the Emergency Tax Law (increasing certain excise and customs duties), and the Arasa Tax Law (providing for a tax of 1 per cent. per annum on undeveloped

urban land). The yield from these new taxes was assessed at I.D. 380,000, the share of the Emergency Tax being I.D. 300,000.

3. Before the budget was passed expenditure was increased to I.D. 6,668,780, or I.D. 599,485 more than the 1939–40 figure. Total ordinary revenue was finally estimated at I.D. 6,426,500, which exceeds last year's figure by I.D. 393,500. The 1940–41 budget thus reveals a deficit of I.D. 240,280. Not only is this the first time that allowance has been made for deficit in the approved estimates, but substantial surpluses have hitherto been realised each year with the exception of [illegible]

[illegible] unbalancing of the budget. The Ministry of Defence's vote, which amounts to [illegible] I.D. 404,000 higher than last year. Slightly more than this sum is actually adopted for additional salaries and allowances arising out of the expansion of the fighting forces. The continued development of educational facilities is reflected in the larger appropriation for the Ministry of Education—I.D. 912,220 [illegible] increase in expenditure on education during a period of financial stringency [illegible] Services is raised from I.D. 376,000 to I.D. 415,680. Other increases include I.D. 31,600 for the Agriculture and Veterinary Departments, I.D. 27,820 for Posts and Telegraphs, I.D. 26,300 for the Public Works Department, and I.D. 21,780 for the Irrigation Department. Referring to these increases in his budget speech, the Minister of Finance emphasised that they were required for schemes connected with the exploitation of certain economic resources, more especially the improvement of live-stock and the yield of agricultural produce [illegible] Police I.D. 38,217.

5. The chief source of revenue, customs and excise, is expected to yield I.D. 3,518,000 as compared with I.D. 3,398,000 provided for in the previous year's estimates. In view of the anticipated contraction of imports, allowance [illegible] offset by the income from the Emergency Customs and Excise Tax—assessed at I.D. 300,000. Up to the present customs receipts have been well maintained, largely because the duties assessed on an *ad valorem* basis, which are understood to represent nearly 40 per cent. of the total, have given a better return owing to [illegible] I.D. 600,500 to I.D. 953,500 is envisaged in taxation on agricultural and pastoral products. Property, income, stamp and radio taxes are expected to produce I.D. 790,800 as compared with I.D. 665,000, and the yield from income tax alone is placed at I.D. 420,000 as against I.D. 350,000. Collections from this tax in recent months have exceeded expectations, the revenue for the year 1939–40 being about I.D. 60,000 higher than the budget provision. The yield from the new Excess Profits Tax is assessed at I.D. 50,000, but it may surpass this figure. The steady development in the revenue earning postal services is shown in the anticipated rise in the receipts of the Posts and Telegraphs Department from I.D. 295,000 to I.D. 353,000. Miscellaneous and departmental receipts, at I.D. 282,250 and I.D. 522,750 respectively, are slightly higher.

6. No precise details are available regarding the position of the ordinary Government accounts when they were closed on the 31st March, 1940, but provisional figures indicate that they will show a deficit of some I.D. 250,000 as compared with an estimated surplus of I.D. 38,000. Ordinary receipts were larger than was anticipated, and the deficiency arose owing to the increased expenditure of certain Ministries, notably the Ministry of Defence, who are understood to have exceeded their authorised expenditure by nearly I.D. 300,000.

7. Despite the deficit in the Ordinary Budget, the position of the Iraqi State finances at the end of the 1939–40 financial year was, in fact, better than a year earlier, the accumulated deficit having been reduced from I.D. 991,000 to less than I.D. 500,000. The improvement was due to a surplus of approximately I.D. 750,000 in the capital works account. Income under this head was swelled to nearly I.D. 3,250,000 by the first I.D. 1 million instalment of the loan of I.D. 3 million from the Iraq Petroleum Company, and also by the rise in the price of gold, which increased the revenue received from oil royalties. Meanwhile, the expenditure actually incurred on public works was less than had been envisaged. I understand from the Ministry of Finance that the Ministry

of Defence, in particular, did not utilise a large proportion of their vote for capital works, presumably because they were able to cover by the credits provided by His Majesty's Government, expenditure which the Iraqi Government would normally have had to finance from their own resources.

8. The Minister of Finance has expressed to me his anxiety concerning the Government's financial position. He fears that the budget will be seriously unbalanced by the rising military expenditure, by Government aid to flood victims, by loss of revenue due to floods in agricultural districts and by shrinkage of revenue for other reasons arising out of the war. He mentioned that flood compensation might amount to £100,000, and I gather that receipts from taxes on agricultural products may suffer to the extent of I.D. 100,000 to I.D. 200,000 as a result of the floods. Estimates of the damage to the barley and cotton crops range from 25 per cent. to 70 per cent. Catch crops, such as maize, and comparatively high prices for agricultural produce will, however, help to make up the losses, which in any case are probably exaggerated. In spite of the difficulties, the Minister of Finance thought that the deficit could be made good by new taxation, such as an increase in income tax, or by cuts in official salaries, or by both methods.

9. The permanent officials of the Ministry of Finance do not appear fully to share the Minister's anxiety, nor to approve of the expedients he has proposed for raising new revenue. His undue alarm is attributed in no small measure to political considerations influenced by—

(1) An authorised budgetary deficit, which is outside Iraqi financial experience, and

(2) The prospect of the accumulated deficit increasing again.

As more drastic steps would make the Government very unpopular, the Minister of Finance has, I understand, been persuaded to limit official salary cuts to a contribution of 4 per cent. of a month's salary to flood relief, and also to give up a proposal to reduce the number of civil servants. There is also opposition to any increase in the scale of income tax, but additional taxation, possibly on agricultural produce, still appears to be under consideration.

10. In any case it is hoped to economise on public works expenditure by postponing works not immediately essential to the defence and economic life of the country. If oil shipments continue normally, capital works receipts during the financial year 1940–41 will amount to approximately I.D. 3,250,000 including [illegible] been calculated provisionally at I.D. 2,500,000, leaving a reserve of I.D. 750,000 to cover the anticipated deficit for 1940–41 and the accumulated deficit brought forward from last year. If the 1940–41 accounts are to be balanced there is thus no margin for contingencies such as compensation for floods, possible military operations in this country or contribution to the cost of the Baghdad–Haifa road. Should oil exports be suspended owing to an extension of the war to the Mediterranean, the Iraqi Government would stand to lose a large proportion of their revenue from that source. They would still receive the dead rents of the British Oil Development and the Basra Petroleum Companies, amounting in all to £400,000 gold, or approximately I.D. 700,000, but the receipts from the Iraq Petroleum Company in respect of or in lieu of royalties would, I understand, probably be reduced to the minimum payment of £400,000 gold provided for in the company's concession. In that event the net loss in revenue to the Iraqi Treasury would be at the rate of about I.D. 700,000 per annum. As the position does not, however, seem to be entirely clear in this respect, it might be desirable to seek the views of the head office of the Iraq Petroleum Company on the liabilities of the company to the Iraqi Government in the event of a suspension of oil shipments owing to *force majeure*.

11. Against the contingencies mentioned above, excluding those which might arise from an extension of the war eastwards, the Iraqi Government have, in addition to the provisional reserve of I.D. 750,000 from capital works receipts, a further reserve of approximately I.D. 500,000 in the form of funds on deposit from various departments, especially the port of Basra. It is considered in the Ministry of Finance that these funds will enable the Government to carry a deficit of some I.D. 500,000 without serious embarrassment; in fact, the senior permanent officials of that Ministry seem confident that the Iraqi Government can shoulder their foreseeable financial burden provided that Iraq is not brought

into direct contact with the war and the intention to eliminate non-essential public works is effectively carried out

12. Judging from an interview which the commercial secretary had with him on the 9th June the Minister of Finance's fears concerning an impending financial crisis seem to have been largely allayed. The Minister stated that revenues were being well maintained, even from sources which it was thought had been adversely affected by the floods He added that, while certain minor problems still remained to be solved, the general outlook for State finances was reasonably satisfactory as far as could be seen at present. At the same time, it seems clear that the Iraqi Government would experience great difficulty under existing conditions in making a substantial cash contribution towards the cost of the construction of the Bagdad Haifa road (see my despatch No. 195 of the 6th May, 1940)

13. I am forwarding separate despatches regarding the budget estimates [illegible] the Fao Bar Dredging Service These estimates, though included in the Budget Law, are kept separate from the main budget of the State

14. The Budget Law also contains the estimates for the Iraqi [illegible] Board, a summary of these estimates being enclosed herewith (*) Rece[illegible] assessed at I D. 160,000 and expenditure at I D 84 224 of which I D 60 000 represents the board's contribution to the Iraqi Government

15. I am sending a copy of this despatch to the Department of Overseas Trade

I have, &c.
BASIL NEWTON

Enclosure in No. 198

Summary of the Iraqi Budget Estimates for the Financial Year 1940 41, *together with the Comparative Figures of the Estimates for* 1939 40

Expenditure

Chapter		*Estimates, 1939–40.*	*Estimates, 1940–41*
I	Pensions and gratuities	227 000	213 000
II	Civil list	54 200	56 462
III	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
V	Comptroller and Auditor General	9 990	9 590
V	Council of Ministers	12 212	12 [illegible]
VI	Ministry for Foreign Affairs	98 610	94 890
VI	Ministry of Finance	333 851	3[illegible]
VI a	Customs and Excise	196 340	197 [illegible]
VII	Ministry of Interior	388 305	307 389
VII a	Iraq Police	685 104	628 887
VII b	Salaries, Ministry of Social Affairs	78 310	87 060
VII c	Health services	376 000	415 [illegible]
X	Ministry of Defence	1 695 100	2,100 000
X	Ministry of Justice	139 040	139 040
X a	Tapu Department and Land Settlement Department	76 482	79 435
XI	Ministry of Education	830 470	912 220
XI	Ministry of Economics	45 100	45,190
XI a	Agriculture and Veterinary Department	112 220	[illegible]
XIII	Ministry of Communications and Works	72 470	[illegible]
XIII a	Public Works Department	212 190	[illegible]
XIII b	Irrigation Department	132 795	[illegible]
XIII c.	Posts and Telegraphs	207 395	[illegible]
	Total ordinary expenditure	[illegible]	[illegible]

(*) Not printed

Receipts

Chapter		*Estimates, 1939–40.*	*Estimates 1940–41*
I	Taxation on agricultural and natural produce animals and rents of Government properties	889 500	953 500
II	Property and radio taxes		
II	Income tax	605 000	790 500
II	Stamp duty		
III	Miscellaneous revenues	276 500	292 250
IV	Customs and Excise	3 398 000	3,518 000
V	Posts and Telegraphs	295,000	353,200
VI	Other Government services and institutions	509 000	522 750
	Total ordinary receipts	6 033,000	6 [illegible]

E 2173 220 93] No. 199

Sir H Knatchbull Hugessen to Viscount Halifax (*Received June* 30)

No. 677
[illegible]
Angora, June 29, 1940

My [illegible]
I [illegible] text of communiqué issued on 28th June —

Turkish and Iraqi statesmen noted ties of friendship and common interest uniting their two countries. This complete identity of views had made visit of Iraqi Minister to Angora extremely useful

(Repeated to Bag[illegible])

E 2190 2022 93 No. 200

Sir B Newton to Viscount Halifax—(*Received July* 8)

(No. 334)
(Telegraphic) *Bagdad, July* 7, 1940

THREE evidently inspired articles recently appeared in newspaper *Al Istiqlal* stating that the foreign policy of Rashid Ali's Government was one of complete neutrality and declaring that this policy was welcomed with joy throughout Iraq

2. I at once sent the counsellor to give the Minister for Foreign Affairs notification that I should wish to know why these articles had been allowed to appear, and what steps would be taken to disavow them Afterwards at an interview on the 6th July I myself asked the Minister for Foreign Affairs for an explanation. He said that the Prime Minister had authorised him to assure me that the articles had been published without his knowledge, that he adhered to his policy to fulfil the Treaty of Alliance and that he would take steps to have published suitable disavowal of these articles

3. In spite of these assurances I cannot believe that the Prime Minister was ignorant of the editor's intention to publish articles in this sense, and from Rashid's recent record I cannot be hopeful that he will issue effective repudiation [illegible] Incident is a further indication of unsatisfactory attitude of present Government whose position I am reviewing in a separate telegram

(Repeated to M E I C, No. 5.)

E 2228 G] No. 201

Sir B Newton to Viscount Halifax —(Received July 9.)

(No. 342 Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, July 8, 1940*

YOUR telegram No 334 [*sic*], paragraph 4, and my telegram No 296 and my telegram No 334

The policy and methods of Rashid Ali in openly playing for safety in regard to Italy and war and in making himself a g[illegible] Palestine th[illegible] recent course of the war was in any [illegible] to produce. Nevertheless, in the situation as described below, I see no su[illegible] alternative to Rashid Ali for the time being, and my provisional conclusion is that it would be wiser not to try to force his resignation unless he were to oppose coming of British troops or for any other reason the situation became crit[illegible]

2. The chief political leader outside the Cabinet is Jamil Madf[illegible] I had a long informal talk on 26th June He told me that when Italy [illegible]ed war he had advised [? rupture] of relations. Since then, however (as British advisor to Ministry of the Interior agrees), doubts and fears of the Government had spread [group undecypherable], public who would in consequence be genuinely upset if the Government, after all that had been happening gave Italy what would be regarded as an unnecessary slap in the face It would be better, therefore, he considered, to await some new justification for rupture, such as safety of British troops, transit or special concessions in regard to Palestine and Syria. Madfai and he had remained outside the present Government in order not to antagonise influential army officers, and he did not think any more representative government could be formed in the present circumstances

3 Some time ago General Nuri told me that if it became desirable under war conditions to form a Government of national concentration, [illegible] powers, he believed that the only man under whom all leaders could serve would [illegible] the Amir to return from Istanbul to Bagdad, but the Amir had wanted [illegible] explanations than could be given except at a personal meeting Nuri admitted also that the attitude of the Regent towards the idea of a Zaid Government was uncertain. Nuri is, however, evidently uneasy in regard to the political situation, and said he might have to resign if it got worse If a change became essential and there were no alternative Prime Minister, he would accept that office once more even at a possible risk to his life, but he much preferred to act at present as No. 2 (in which I think he is right) At the same time Nuri acquitted Rashid Ali of bad faith and ill will towards British alliance. His chief faults were, Nuri believed his desire to please everybody, and his consequent inability to give the lead that was so badly needed in these critical times Given time Rashid Ali will, no doubt, discredit himself, and if we can afford to wait it would certainly seem preferable for him to fall as a result of domestic reasons, rather than of direct pressure from us on an issue in which he can mobilise public support The British advisor found him this morning genuinely anxious to dissociate himself from recent articles in *Al Istiqlal*, and aware of the fact that under the treaty Iraq cannot be neutral

(Repeated to M I C E., No. 11, and Government of India. No 43.)

E 2280 493 93] No. 202

Sir B Newton to Viscount Halifax —(Received July 13.)

(No 354A.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, July 13, 1940*

YOUR telegram No 295

Views also recorded in my telegram No. 315 were those to which he [illegible] repeatedly emphasised the first and second points made in your paragraph 2 and also in very guarded form the third point. Nor was this the first occasion on which I had employed such arguments in interviews with the Prime Minister (see my telegram No 294) and in talks with many other Iraqi politicians. I will continue to use them as opportunity offers.

2. Some Iraqis are open to persuasion, but the Prime Minister is rather obsessed, and although timid liable to be reckless if he believes public opinion to be behind him. In his vanity he hopes to be the Arab hero who can use the present opportunity to achieve Arabic ambitions hereby to safeguard the present is, therefore, not enough He does not want to preserve the *status quo*, and if he is to follow the advice of His Majesty's Government he wants to have some assurance that it will lead him out of *status quo* to his goal, or at least that His Majesty's Government will support his aims at the Peace Conference

3 Further argument will not, I fear, move the Prime Minister or many who think as he does, including dominant clique in the army The only effective method will be to show that his policy does not pay For that purpose I might tell him officially or let it be generally known that failure of the present Prime M[illegible]ster to take the right opportunities for breaking off relations with Italy his refusal adequately to control the press or give proper lead to public opinion, and his handling of the questions of Syria and of Palestine had made a bad impression in London, and that unless this impression could be effaced, it would become increasingly difficult for me to persuade His Majesty's Government either to show as many special favours [group omitted [illegible] to] Iraq as they had done hithe[illegible] the past to representations received from Iraq on external matters, such as Palestine I have already impressed vague fears to the above effect, but without much influence on the Prime Minister personally, when hinted at on one occasion in conversation with him For reasons explained in my telegram No 342 I doubt whether it is wise, especially before troops come, to go further for the time being and give him provocation which may be unnecessary Meanwhile, doubts as to the wisdom of a policy liable to alienate Iraq's only reliable friend may spread themselves

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 124 Saving, and Jerusalem, No 50, Saving.)

E 2329 2329 93] No. 203

Sir B Newton to Viscount Halifax —(Received August 1.)

(No 310.)
My Lord, *Baghdad, June 29 1940*

W[illegible] to your circular despatch of the 6th June, 1938, I have the [illegible] to transmit herewith a revised report on the leading personalities of Iraq for the year 1940

I have, &c.
BASIL NEWTON

Enclosure in No 203

Report on the Leading Personalities of Iraq for the Year 1940.

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THE ROYAL FAMILY

1 *King Faisal II*.—Born in Bagdad the 2nd May, 1935. Succeeded to the throne on the death of his father, Ghazi I, on the 3rd April, 1939. His mother is a sister of the Amir Abdul Ilah. He has an English nurse and also a newly arrived English governess, Miss Salman. Is a bright, intelligent child

2 *Abdul Ilah, His Royal Highness the Amir* Only son of Ali bin Hussein, ex King of the Hejaz, who died in 1935 Born in the Hejaz 1912 Came to Bagdad as a child with father in 1926, after the latter's expulsion from the Hejaz Educated partly at home and partly at Victoria College, Alexandria

He speaks good English

In November 1936 he married in Bagdad the daughter of Salah al Din Fauzi Beg and grand-daughter of Amin Yahiyah Pasha of Cairo

He is keenly interested in Arab horse racing and maintains a large stable

Became Regent on the death of King Ghazi on the 3rd April, 1939 Although in Iraq he only enjoys the title of Highness, it is considered proper for foreigners to refer to him as His Royal Highness

During the first year of the Regency he has begun to show a promising capacity for his official duties. He is pro-English and straightforward

3 *Zaid, His Royal Highness the Amir*.—Born in Constantinople in 1900 [illegible] son of the late King Hussein of the Hejaz Half brother of King Ali, [illegible] Faisal and the Amir Abdullah (of Transjordan) His mother was a Turk [illegible] cated in Constantinople Fought with the Arab Nationalist forces during the Great War, and won the good opinion of the British officers with the Sharifian army

Came to live in Iraq in 1922, and was commissioned in the Iraqi cavalry. Acted as Regent for a short time in 1924 during King Faisal's absence

In 1925 he went to England and studied agriculture at Oxford for nearly three years. During this period he took an active part in the social life of the [illegible] In 192[illegible] [illegible]

in Cyprus and remained there until King Hussein's death in 1931 Appointed Iraqi Minister at Angora in January 1932

In 1933 it became known that one of his sisters had contracted a clandestine marriage with Atta Beg Amin, some time first secretary at the Iraqi Legation at Angora (and later at the Legation in London) The Royal Family were indignant, and Zaid was transferred to Cairo in January 1934 as the first Iraqi Minister at King Fuad's Court. He did not, however proceed to this post, which he ultimately refused to accept At the end of 1934 he was busy in Athens engaged in litigation concerning extensive properties which he claims [illegible] inherited in Greece Appointed Iraqi Minister at Berlin in September 1935 In the spring of 1937 it was suspected that he had been using his position as Iraqi Minister to give false certificates for arms destined for Spain He was recalled to Iraq for enquiries, but apparently established his innocence and returned to Berlin

He is a pleasant, well mannered man, and speaks excellent English and Turkish

In 1933 he married a Turkish lady who had been divorced by her husband This *mesalliance* mattered little so long as he was not living in Iraq, but when he was withdrawn from Berlin in the spring of 1938 and came to live in Bagdad it was counted against him locally But for his wife he would probably have been made Regent after the death of King Ghazi in April 1939. Since the summer of 1939 he has been living in Istanbul

OTHER PERSONALITIES

1 *Abbas-i Mahmud Agha* —Chieftain of the Pizhder tribe (Kurdish) (see Babekr Agha) Generally on the side of disorder when trouble is brewing Maintains a tradition of being at feud with Babekr Agha, but both take care that this enmity shall not weaken the strength of the tribe

2. *Abbas Mahdi* Shiah Born 1898 Secretary to Iraqi Legation in Tehran 1931 Minister for Education, November 1932 Resigned with Cabinet in March 1933. Appointed Director General of Tapu in October 1933

Became Minister for Economics and Communications in February 1934, but resigned with Jamil al Madfai's Cabinet in August 1934. Reappointed Director-General of Tapu, December 1934

Appointed Master of Ceremonies in the Palace, March 1937 [illegible] Hikmat Sulaiman's Cabinet in June 1937 as Minister for Econom[illegible] Communications, and was appointed Minister for Justice in the Cabinet [illegible] by Jamil al Madfai in August 1937 after Hikmat Sulaiman's resignation.

Transferred to the Ministry of Economics and Communications in October 1938, and resigned with whole Cabinet in December 1938

3. *Abdul Aziz-al Mudhaffar, M B E*.—Sunni of Bagdad Born 1897 Speaks English, German and French well Served as superintendent in Deputy Military Governor's Office, Bagdad Rasafah under the Government of Occupation from March 1917, and in 1919 became Mudir of Rasafah Secretary to the Ministry of Interior, December 1920, and Director of the Press Bureau in 1922 Director of Census Department 1927

Appointed Mutessarif of Mosul, May 1931. Withdrawn September 1931 for [illegible] and appointed to be member of Muntafiq Land Court. Lost this post when the court was abolished in June 1932 In the summer of 1933 was appointed first secretary to the Iraqi Legation at Tehran, and in May 1934 was transferred to be consul-general in Beirut.

Appointed counsellor to the Iraqi Legation in Paris, May 1935.

In the spring of 1937 he was accused of giving false certificates for munitions [illegible] for Spain [illegible] Iraq In Syria he was arrested, but extradition was refused and he was released, but remained in Syria He is married to a daughter of Naji al Suwaidi, and this family connexion brought about his full exoneration in December.

He returned to live in Bagdad in January 1938, and shortly afterwards it [illegible] had been proved that he was innocent of the charges made against him in 1937. Since his return he has gone into business

4. *Abdul Aziz-al Qassab.*—Sunni of Bagdad. Kaimakam of Kut under the Turkish Provisional Government and did very well. In October 1921 he was appointed Mutessarif of Mosul on probation for six months, but refused to go without the salary of a full mutessarif. In the beginning of 1922 he went as Mutessarif of Karbala, was transferred to Muntafiq in January 1923, and to the Ministry of Interior as Director-General of General Administration in June of the same year. Appointed Mutessarif of Mosul in January 1924. A capable and well intentioned official without much strength of character. Minister of Interior, January 1928. Minister for Justice, November 1929.

Went out of office with the resignation of Naji Pasha's Cabinet in March 1930. Has not held any other Cabinet post since. Has an adequate pension. Appointed Chief Administrative Inspector, Grade I, November 1935.

He was appointed Minister of the Interior in the Cabinet formed by Jamil al Madfai in March 1935, but resigned with all his colleagues twelve days later. [illegible] a Deputy for Bagdad in the general elections of August 1935. Appointed Comptroller-General of Accounts in December 1937, in succession to Taufiq-al Suwaidi.

5. *Abdul Ghafur-al Badri.*—Ex-cadet in the Turkish army and second lieutenant in the Sharifian army.

Since 1920 has been editor of the Nationalist newspaper, the *Istiqlal*. This journal has been suspended many times for its violent attacks on the British Government and on British officials in Iraq.

Elected Deputy for Diyala 1933. Re-elected for Kut in the general election of 1934. Lost his seat in August 1935. His paper, the *Istiqlal*, was suspended in November 1936 for one year by Hikmat Sulaiman's Cabinet for publishing articles defending Yasin-al Hashimi's administration.

This order was cancelled when Jamil al Madfai succeeded Hikmat Sulaiman in August 1937.

Elected Deputy for Kut, December 1937.

In October 1938 he was sentenced to six months' imprisonment for publishing unfounded allegation against the Government in his paper the *Istiqlal*. Released when Nuri-al Said became Prime Minister on the 25th December, 1938, and returned for Kut in the elections of June 1939.

6. *Abdul Latif Nuri.*—Born in Bagdad 1888. Gazetted as officer in the [illegible] 1921 [illegible] 1926 [illegible] 1928. He was acting for command of the Northern and Southern Districts, and has passed the senior and junior officers' courses, and was posted to the Northern [illegible] 1931. Promoted *amir liwa* (brigadier) in 1932.

Joined General Bakr Sidqi as leader of the army revolt against Yasin-al [illegible] formed by Hikmat Sulaiman.

Resigned after the murder of Bakr Sidqi in August 1937 and was then placed on retired pay.

7. *Abdul Mahdi (Sayyid).*—Shaikh of Shuraia (Muntafiq). Born about 1891. Belong[illegible] in 1927. Minister for Education under Rashid Ali-al Gilani, March–October 1933. Lost his seat in the Chamber in the election of 1934.

He was a strong partisan of Yasin Pasha and a member of the Executive Committee of the Party of National Brotherhood [illegible].

After the dissolution of the party in 1935 he played no part in politics, until he was again elected to the Chamber in December 1937.

He was again returned for this constituency in June 1939.

8. [illegible] Elder brother of Yusuf Gilani. Born Bagdad 1894. [illegible] since 1926 and shortly [illegible] was appointed [illegible] in London. While in London he studied at the [illegible]

[illegible] 1934. [illegible]

Egyptian girl of good family and was popular in Egyptian society. Appointed Master of Ceremonies at the Royal Palace, April 1940, where he appears likely to exercise a good influence. Speaks good English.

9. *Abdul Qadir-al Rashid.*—Sunni of Bagdad, related to the Gilani family. Born 1894. Speaks English well.

Appointed secretary to the Council of Ministers in 1924 in succession to Hussein Arnan. Remained in that post, the duties of which he discharged with noteworthy tact and efficiency, until November 1932, when he was appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs in Naji Shaukat's Cabinet. Resigned with Cabinet in March 1933. Was appointed an assistant manager in the Rafidain Oil Company in October 1933.

10. *Abdul Wahid, Shaikh.*—Chief of the Fatlah tribe, son of Haji Sikkar, once the most powerful sheikhs on the Euphrates. Abdul Wahid cultivates extensive properties on the left bank of the Mishkab from Abu Sukhair to the Derahim. Throughout recent years he has steered his course with a view to maintain to the utmost his political and tribal influence. His support and loyalty were carefully cultivated by King Feisal, and all political parties have thought it worth while to try to make him an adherent. He has many friends and many bitter enemies, and is reputed to deal harshly with his fellaheen.

He was prominent as a leader of discontent in the Middle Euphrates area in the spring of 1935, working with Rashid Ali-al Gilani to overthrow Ali Jaudat's Cabinet.

He had much influence during Yasin-al Hashimi's tenure of office, but so abused it that after Yasin's fall in October 1936 he was afraid to return to his tribe.

He was elected to the Chamber in February 1937, but in July 1937 he was arrested and imprisoned for fomenting tribal disturbances in Diwaniyah. After the fall of Hikmat Sulaiman's Government in August 1937 he was released from prison, but kept under surveillance first in Sulaimani and later in Samawa.

He was permitted to return to his home in July 1938 and elected Deputy for Diwaniyah in June 1939.

11. *Abdullah al Damluji.*—Formerly called Abdullah Said Effendi. Born 1895. A native of Mosul. Studied medicine in Constantinople and calls himself doctor, though it is believed that he did not graduate. Seems to have been serving in the Turkish army when Ibn Saud occupied Hassa in 1913, and to have transferred his allegiance to Ibn Saud. Soon rose to a position of influence in Ibn Saud's Court, and came to Bagdad as his unofficial representative in 1921. Was Ibn Saud's Minister for Foreign Affairs in 1922 and signed the Uqair Protocol. Went with the Amir Feisal al Saud to London in 1926, and took part [illegible] After this his influence waned owing to the intrigues of Fuad Hamza and Yusuf Yasin.

In August 1928 he represented the Court of Nejd, the Hejaz and its dependencies at the Medina Railway Conference at Haifa. The conference was a failure, and when it ended, instead of returning to the Hejaz, Abdullah Damluji came to Bagdad, posting his resignation to Ibn Saud. Arrived Bagdad, [illegible] October 1930, and appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs. This at first was resented by Ibn Saud and for a short time Damluji's presence at the head of the Iraqi Ministry for Foreign Affairs seemed likely to embarrass Nejdi and Iraqi relations, but when Nuri Pasha visited Jedda in April 1931 Ibn Saud stated that he no longer wished to raise any objection to Damluji's appointment. Was [illegible] Appointed Director-General of Health July 1932, and succeeded Safwat Pasha as Court Chamberlain at the end of 1933.

Returned to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Jamil-al Madfai's second Cabinet in February 1934; resigned in July and was reappointed Director-General of Health in September.

He was suspended in 1935 and tried for misappropriation of public funds. He was acquitted and reinstated in his post at the end of December but resigned a few months later.

For nearly two years he remained out of public life, but in July 1937 he was appointed Master of Ceremonies at the Palace in succession to Abbas Mahdi.

He headed the Iraqi representatives at the funeral of Ataturk in November 1938. Soon after Nuri al Said became Prime Minister in December 1938 he was removed from the Palace to an obscure appointment in the Health Department, which was later abolished.

12. *Ahmad, Shaikh of Barzan.*—A chieftain of the Kurdish Zibar tribe. Headquarters at Barzan at the foot of the Chia i Shirin. Exercised powerful influence over the Barosh and Mazuri Bala areas to the north west of Rowanduz. Friendly relations were established with him in 1919, but no administrative control was exercised in his tribal area. In 1920 he was implicated in the murder of two British officials. He and Faris Agha of Bera Kapra were declared outlaws with a price on their heads, and Barzan was destroyed by troops, but his country was not occupied. In 1922 he welcomed Turkish agents into Barosh and Mazuri Bala, and in September 1922 his men made an unsuccessful attack on Amadiyah [illegible] with Assyrian irregulars. In 1923, the Turks having been driven from Rowanduz, Sheikh Ahmad turned on their retreating columns and came into Aqra to make peace with the Anglo Iraqi authorities. His outlawry was cancelled, and he was permitted to continue in unmolested control of his tribal villages and mountains. [illegible] Rashid to flight into Persia and set fire to his villages. Government intervention became necessary to restore order. Iraqi troops were concentrated early in 1932 and after some sharp fighting, followed by intensive air action by the Royal Air Force, Sheikh Ahmad was defeated and driven across the Turkish border in June. He and his two brothers, Muhammad Sadiq and Mulla Mustafa, were interned for a time in Turkey, but the two latter contrived to find their way back into their old haunts in the following winter. After holding out in the mountains for some months they surrendered and were pardoned in July 1933 and allowed to return to their villages. A short time afterwards the Turks surrendered Sheikh Ahmad [illegible] over a year he lived in comfortable and honourable detention in Mosul, but in November 1934 it was found that he was in collusion with Khalil Khushawi, who was disturbing the peace of the Barzan area, and he was thereupon removed to Hillah.

Permitted to come to Bagdad in April 1935. A short while later he went to live in Sulaimani. He finds it very hard to maintain a large family on the allowance of 30 Iraqi dinars a month that he receives from the Iraqi Government.

13. *Ahmad al Shaikh Daud, Sayid.*—Sunni of Bagdad. Born about 1875. He comes of a family of learned men, his father was a well known teacher in Bagdad, under whom most of the men of Sheikh Ahmad's generation studied. In the early days of the occupation he was a prominent Nationalist. He was arrested and deported to Henjam in August 1920, but was allowed to return to Bagdad in February 1921. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in March 1924, he opposed the treaty of 1922 and voted against it. Failed to secure a seat in the subsequent general election, but was successful at a by-election. In October 1925 he became pro-treaty, but in January 1926 voted against ratification of the extension of the treaty period. Minister for Auqaf under Abdul Muhsin Beg in January 1928, but resigned office April 1929. Elected to the Chamber as Deputy for Bagdad in October 1933, and retained this seat in the elections of 1934.

Lost his seat in August 1935.

He is now an ageing man and is unlikely again to play a prominent part in politics.

Made a Senator in May 1937. Resigned October 1937.

His daughter Sabiha (a teacher on the Women's Training College) became the first woman student in the Bagdad Law College in 1937.

14. [illegible] born 1898, who has had the advantage of a better education than most of his contemporaries. He has held a number of administrative appointments since the first days of the occupation of the Suleimani Liwa. Was appointed mutessarif after the reoccupation of Suleimani in 1924. The Iraqi Government have several times endeavoured to [illegible] have not been successful. Ahmad Beg has now (1933) been mutessarif without interruption since 1930. He is [illegible] by marriage with the ruling family of the Pizhder tribe, and owns property in the Surdash nahiyah. A pleasant and presentable man, who has always been popular with British civil and military officers.

Transferred as mutessarif to Arbil in April 1935.

Made an administrative inspector April 1939. Placed on pension in spring of 1940.

15. *Ahmad Zaki al-Khayat.*—Shiah Baghdadi. Born 1896. [illegible] Bagdad Law School. Has held the following posts: Secretary of the Ministry of Education, consul-general at Muhammerah and Bombay, kaimakam in several places, Mutessarif of Kut and Hillah and Land Settlement Officer. Appointed Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs in July 1937.

16. *Ajil al Yawar.*—Paramount Sheikh of the Shammar Jarba (Arab) tribe of Iraq.

His tribal authority is exercised over the Northern Jazirah from the Sinjar to the Aqarquf depression to the west of Bagdad. A fine man physically, who has cleverly adapted himself to the changing political conditions which have followed the British occupation of Iraq. For some years after the division of the Jazirah between the British and French mandates, tribal troubles were caused by his rivalry with Diham-al-Hadi, the chief of the Shammar, whose territory [illegible] down to a mutual acceptance of the division of the tribes, and have seemingly agreed to leave each other in peace. Ajil is eager to adopt modern methods of cultivation, and has a number of irrigation pumps. He has also profited largely [illegible] the Shammar tribal territory.

His eldest son, Sufuq, was educated at the American college at Beirut, but has now finished his schooling and has returned to live with the tribe. He is a great help to his father.

Ajil visited England for the Coronation in May 1937 and afterwards travelled in Germany and France.

In November 1938 he came into conflict with the Aqaidat tribe of Syria on account of his collecting khawa from Aqaidat caravans collecting salt at Mitha Adaid on the frontier. The dispute was settled by Syrian and Iraqi frontier commissioners.

An ancient feud between the Shammar and the Ubaid broke out again in February 1939. A Shammari related to Ajil murdered the Shaikh of the Ubaid and three days later an Ubaid tribesman murdered a Shammar Shaikh outside his house in Bagdad.

After a period of tension the feud was settled in May by a tribal court presided over by the Prime Minister. Both sides accepted peace and pledged themselves to maintain it.

During 1938-39 the German Legation in Bagdad made a special effort to establish close touch with Ajil, and several German travellers visited him, but he is generally believed to be pro-English. He visited England again in 1939. He made much money out of the railway extension work from Baiji to Mosul. His brother was imprisoned in Syria early in 1940 for raiding across the border.

17. *Akram Mushtaq.*—Born Bagdad 1903. Moslem Sunni. Brother of Talib Mushtaq (*q.v.*). Gazetted officer in army 1927. Passed through Cranwell and appointed to Royal Iraqi air force in 1930. Promoted captain 1932. Took an active part in the *coup d'Etat* of October 1936. Promoted major 1937 and lieutenant-colonel in 1938. Appointed Commander of Iraqi air force in September 1937. Retained this post until April 1939, when he was relieved of his command and commission and appointed Director of Civil Aviation. Married a daughter of Sheikh Ahmad al-Sheikh Daud in spring of 1940.

18. *Ali Jaudat.*—Sunni, of humble Mosul origin. Born 1886. Officer in the Turkish army, fought at Shumbah; subsequently surrendered to the British and [illegible] early in 1920, and was subsequently in Dair. Returned to Bagdad with the Amir Feisal in June 1921, and in October 1921 was given the post of Mutessarif of Hillah, which he held till September 1922. He took a very active part in the

anti-mandate agitation, and was finally dismissed (on the advice of the High Commissioner) for defrauding the Treasury by underestimating revenue demands [illegible] supporters of his political views. In January 1923 he was appointed Mutessarif of Karbala in the hope that he might be able to reconcile the *mujtahids*. He was unsuccessful, and in May was transferred to Muntafiq, where he did very well. Minister of Interior in the Askari Cabinet November 1923 [illegible] ned for the treaty. Appointed Mutessarif of Diyala, and later [illegible] rly 1930 was made Director of the Ministry of the Interior. Minister for Finance under Nuri Pasha, March 1930. Resigned from Nuri Pasha's Cabinet in September 1930, as a protest against the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of that year, and his seat in the Chamber in 1931 together with Rashid Ali al Gilani and Yasin al Hashimi in March 1932. Re-elected for Mosul 1933. Appointed principal private secretary to the King, March 1933. Became Prime Minister and Acting Minister of the Interior in August 1934. Was forced to resign in February 1935 on account of the agitation worked up against him throughout the country by Yasin al Hashimi and Rashid Ali al-Gilani. He was made President of the Chamber in March 1935 and appointed Iraqi Minister in London in August 1935. Transferred to Paris in December 1936.

He came to Bagdad on leave in October 1937 and decided not to return to his post at Paris.

Appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs in Nuri al Said's Cabinet in April 1939. Resigned with whole Cabinet in February 1940.

Has a son, Nizar, who is at Downing College, Cambridge.

19. *Ali Mahmud Shaikh Ali*.—Born 1902. Sunni Arab connected with the [illegible] lawyer for about thirteen years. He also learnt to speak English and French. He became well known as an extreme Nationalist and contributed many articles to the newspaper the *Istiqlal* attacking British policy in Iraq. He was arrested in 1924 on account of his agitation against the first Anglo-Iraqi Treaty, but was acquitted on trial. He was brought before the courts again in 1930 for a similarly [illegible] and sentenced to a short term of imprisonment. He has twice been elected to the Chamber of Deputies. He was one of the members of the delegation of Iraqi notables which visited Palestine and Egypt in 1936 and a short time after his [illegible] Prime Minister) to a judgeship in the Court of Appeal. In this post he has shown more talent and good sense than was to be expected from his past career. Appointed Minister of Justice in Hikmat Sulaiman's reorganised Cabinet in June 1937. Resigned August 1937 and returned to the Bar.

Banished from Bagdad by Jamil al Madfai's Cabinet in November 1938 but was permitted to return when Nuri al Said formed a Cabinet in December 1938. In February 1939 he was appointed Mutessarif of Basra, where he soon [illegible] for about a year he was transferred to Bagdad to be Director General of Customs and Excise. As a mutessarif he allowed his political prejudices to colour too deeply his administrative activities.

20. *Ali Mumtaz*.—Born 1901. Sunni of Bagdad. Belongs to the Daftari family. Graduated at Bagdad Law College and entered Government service in 1920. Married a daughter of Yasin-al Hashimi in 1933. Appointed Director General of Revenues in 1935 but was obliged to leave Iraq for a time when Bakr Sidqi overthrew Yasin al Hashimi's Government in 1936. In January 1939 he was reappointed Director-General of Revenues by Nuri al-Said's Cabinet.

21. *Amin al Umari*.—Born Mosul 1889 of the notable family of the Umari. Passed out of the Military College in Bagdad in 1906 and then entered the Artillery School in Constantinople, where he remained for three years. Gazetted second lieutenant in 1909 and posted to Adana. Later he served in 1910 in operations against the Shammar and in 1911 and 1912 against the tribes in Samawa, Abu Sukhair and Ramaitha. Entered the Turkish Staff College in 1912. Fought in the Balkan war and was mentioned in despatches for good work on [illegible] Madfai) in the Arab insurrections at Deir-ez Zor and Tell Afar. He returned to Mosul after the general amnesty in 1920 and joined the Iraqi army at the time of its formation. He was promoted Assistant Chief of the General Staff in

1935 and General Officer Commanding the Northern Area in 1937. In August 1937 he refused to carry out the orders given to him by the Government to arrest a number of officers charged with co-operating in Bakr Sidqi's murder, and this successful defiance brought about the fall of Hikmat Sulaiman's Cabinet. Soon after, when Jamil al Madfai came into office, Amin al Umari was transferred to command of the Bagdad District.

Went to Europe on leave in the winter of 1938 to undergo medical treatment. As a soldier he is out of date and obstinately refuses to modernise his tactical ideas. Was relieved of his command and placed on pension in February 1940 because of the influence which he endeavoured to exercise in political matters outside his proper sphere.

22. *Amin Zaki Sulaiman*.—A Moslem (Sunni) of Turkoman origin. Bo[illegible] [illegible] lieutenant in the Turkish army in 1905.

He joined the Iraq army in 1921 as a captain, and was promoted major in 1926 and lieutenant-colonel in 1930, when he was placed in command of the 4th Iraqi Infantry Battalion.

He was promoted colonel in 1934 and appointed to the command of the Northern Division with headquarters at Mosul, [illegible] He was appointed quarter master general. In October 1935 [illegible] Promoted [illegible] [illegible] he was appointed G.O.C., the [illegible] was still holding when he was appointed [illegible] or general in June 1940.

He [illegible] senior officer now serving in the Iraq army. Is a staunch supporter of Taha al Hashimi and is considered a capable officer and a strict disciplinarian, but is generally unpopular in the army with both officers and men.

23. [illegible] Of the well known Umari family of Mosul. Born [illegible] Trained as an engineer in the days of the Turk. Municipal engineer in [illegible] ple. Staff officer during the war. Speaks French and understands some English. Member of the first Iraqi Parliament and supporter of Abdul Muhsin Beg. Appointed by latter first Iraqi Director General of Posts and Telegraphs. Made Amin al Asimah (Mayor of Bagdad), November 1931 and during his two-year tenure of that appointment did much for the improvement of the amenities of Bagdad. Was appointed Director of Irrigation in [illegible] 1933. Joined Ali Jaudat's Cabinet in August 1934 as Minister for Economics and Communications. Resigned with the Cabinet in February 1935 and remained without a post until May 1936, when he was appointed Director General of Municipalities. In November 1936 he again became Mayor of Bagdad, in which capacity he is well known and liked by most of the foreign community. Believed to be pro-British.

24. *Asim al Naqib, Sayyid*.—The fourth son of Sayyid Abdul Rahman [illegible] Born Bagdad 1879. Appointed Naqib on the death of Sayyid Mahmud in July 1936. A man of little character but he has successfully acquired the conventional appearance of a Sunni Alim and holy man.

25. *Ato Amin*.—Born 1897. Appointed secretary to the Iraqi Legation i[illegible] September 1932 [illegible]

In the summer of 1933 it was discovered that he had, while in Turkey, married one of the sisters of the Amir Zaid, the Iraqi Minister in Angora and younger brother of King Faisal. This was regarded as a scandal at the time but later on he was forgiven. Appointed first secretary to the Iraqi Legation at Rome, October 1934. Transferred to London as counsellor in August 1935. Transferred to Paris as chargé d'affaires in August 1938 and to Berlin in February 1939.

In July 1939 he returned to Rome and remained there until June 1940, when he was transferred to London.

26. *Brbekr Agha*.—A powerful chief of the Pizhder (Kurdish) tribe of Qalah Diza (on the Lesser Zab River, north of Suleimani). Has always been honest and friendly in his dealings with the Government, whether British or Iraqi. An

able and most estimable man, who has been liked and respected by all who have had close contact with him.

His rival for tribal influence is Abbas Mahmud Agha, who has always tended to be against the Government. Both, however, visited Bagdad in October 1933 and protested their loyalty and obedience to the Iraqi Government.

He has behaved well since the Iraqi Government established normal administration in the Pizhder area in 1938.

27. *Daud al Haidari.*—Sunni of Bagdad. Born about 1880. Son of Ibrahim Effendi, ex Sheikh al-Islam. The family comes from Arbil, where Ibrahim Effendi has a small property. Daud Pasha was a Deputy and an aide-de-camp to the Sultan Abdul Hamid. Speaks Turkish better than Arabic. He was in Constantinople during the war, and returned to Bagdad in 1921. Appointed, in October 1922, Amin al Umana (Chamberlain) in the King's palace. Member for Arbil in the Constituent Assembly, March 1924, and Vice-President. Voted for the treaty 1924. Hazb-al Shab and opposed treaty of 1926. Minister for Justice under Taufiq Suwaidi, April-November 1929. Disliked and distrusted in Arbil.

Re-elected to Chamber of Deputies to represent Arbil in general election of 1930, but has not held Cabinet appointment since Taufiq Suwaidi's Cabinet resigned in August 1929. In 1930 became lawyer for the British Oil Development Company in Bagdad, and has done quite well out of this work. Was not elected to the Chamber in the elections of 1934.

28. *Daud al Sadi, Sayyid.*—Sunni of Bagdad. Born about 1887. Prominent [illegible] intrigues. Elected to the Chamber for Hillah in August 1935.

Appointed public prosecutor in August 1938 by Yasin al Hashimi's Cabinet. Resigned in December after Yasin's fall.

Elected to the Chamber for Kut in December 1937 and again in June 1939. Banished from Bagdad by Jamil al Madfai in December 1938, but returned as soon as Nuri al Said became Prime Minister.

29. *Fadhil Jamali, Dr.*—Born Kadhimain 1902. Shiah. Educated at the [illegible] 1921-27 [illegible] New York 1927-29. Wrote a thesis on education among the tribes for his doctorate. On his return to Iraq he was appointed to the Ministry of Education, where he soon made his mark. In 1933 he was made Director General of Instruction, and has filled this post with success. Keen and competent, but with a natural predilection for American methods.

In early 1938 he was invited by the British Council to visit the United Kingdom to study British educational methods. He was well entertained and [illegible] favourably disposed towards British education. It is often said that his influence in the Ministry of Education is anti British, but, however that may be, he has always collaborated in the most friendly manner with the embassy in developing the work of the British Council in Iraq.

30. *Ismail al Mudarris.*—Born about 1874. Superintendent of the Govern- [illegible] with him in London in 1920. Appointed Chamberlain on King Feisal's accession. Was in close touch with the extreme Nationalists in 1922, and at the High Commissioner's request was dismissed from the Palace. In June 1924 he was [illegible] when the college was closed. In March 1932 he was expelled from Bagdad to Arbil on account of his subversive political activities, but was permitted to return [illegible] but frequently contributes articles to the press in which he expounds Nationalist views.

Appointed rector of the Al al-Bait Theological College in 1937. Was placed on pension a year later.

31. *Faris Agha.*—Chieftain of the Zibar tribe (Kurds), who lives at Huki in the Aqra district. [illegible] 1918-19 until 1923, he has a stormy record of hostility towards the authority of the Government. Since 1923 he has been quieter, though he and his tribesmen are always a perpetual danger to the peace of the Aqra district, and the local

authorities have little real authority among his villages. He has an old feud with Ahmad of Barzan, whose territory lies adjacent to that of Faris on the opposite side of the Greater Zab River. Elected Deputy in February 1937, but lost his seat in the elections of June 1939.

32. *Hanna Khoyat.*—Syrian Catholic of Mosul. Born 1884. Medical diploma at Beirut and Paris, much medical and administrative experience and extremely able on both sides. Head of the Mosul Hospital under the Government of Occupation. Appointed Minister of Health 1921. When the Ministry was abolished in 1922 he accepted the post of Director of Medical Services. Speaks excellent French. Appointed Director-General in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs October 1931. Appointed Inspector-General of Health in 1933. Became director of the Bagdad General Hospital and dean of the Royal Medical College in September 1934. [illegible] 1937. Inspector-General of the Ministry of Social Affairs in December 1939.

33. *Hikmat, Sulaiman.*—Sunni. Born 1886. Director of Education in Bagdad under the Turks. Also Assistant Governor. Member of C.U.P. Was in Constantinople at the time of the occupation. Returned in January 1921 and was a candidate for the Ministry of Education. Made Director of Posts in April 1922 and Director General of Posts and Telegraphs in April 1923. Minister of Interior in the second Sadun Cabinet. Lost his seat in the Chamber in the general election of 1930, but became Minister for Interior in March 1933. Resigned from Cabinet with Rashid Ali in October 1933, and from Chamber in November 1933. He played an active part in organising intensive opposition to Ali Jaudat's Cabinet in the early months of 1935, but refused office in the Cabinet formed by Yasin Pasha after Ali Jaudat's fall. Paid a long visit to Turkey in the summer of 1935 and returned full of praise for modern Turkish methods. In the autumn of 1935 he was offered the portfolio of the Ministry of Justice, but [illegible] much respected.

In October 1936 he joined with Bakr Sidqi in the plot which resulted in the successful military revolt against Yasin al Hashimi's Government, and upon Yasin's resignation he became Prime Minister. He remained in office until August 1937 when, after the murder of Bakr Sidqi, he and his Cabinet resigned. As a Prime Minister he was disappointing. His intentions were excellent, but his impatience with detail and administrative routine, coupled with the [illegible] influence exercised by Bakr Sidqi over the Cabinet, prevented him from a[illegible] anything of importance.

A well mannered man of wide Liberal views.

In 1938, though he took no active part in politics, he was on the alert to keep Nuri-al Said from returning to power. When Nuri al Said formed a Government in December 1938, he sent messages of goodwill to Hikmat and later calls were exchanged between Hikmat and Sabah, Nuri's son. In spite of their reconciliation, he was arrested early in March 1939, tried by court martial for treason and sentenced to death. This was at the same time commuted to five years' imprisonment. In the summer of 1939 he was removed to Sulaimani, where he was interned in a comfortable house.

34. *Husain Afnan, Sayyid.*—Grandson on the maternal side of Baha Ullah, the Persian reformer. Born at Acre in 1889, educated at the Quaker School at Brumana, the American College, Beirut, and Cambridge, where he graduated. He is married to a tiresome woman. Freethinker, but very proud of his grandfather. Appointed Secretary to the Council of Ministers in November 1920, which post he filled with distinction until dismissed in 1924 by Yasin Pasha. He then took up commerce in partnership with Sh[illegible] 1929 he was appointed "chef de protocole," and in January 1930 secretary to the Iraqi Legation in London. Transferred in September 1932 as secretary to the Legation at Angora, but the post was abolished soon after his appointment. In May 1934 he was given a good post in the Railway Directorate.

35. *Husain Fauzi bin Hassan.*—Sunni of Kurdish origin. Born in Bagdad in 1889. Entered the Military College in Istanbul and received a commission in the Turkish army in 1909. Joined the Iraqi army (artillery) in May 1922. Promoted major 1925. He has passed the Senior Officers' Course at Belgaum, India, and has twice been attached to units in England for training. Promoted

[illegible] lieutenant-colonel in 1929 and colonel in 1933. In 1934 he was appointed [illegible] Staff School, Baghdad, and in February 1935 he was given the command of the Northern District. In August 1935 he became a brigadier and in November 1936 he was made G.O.C., 1st Infantry Division. A pleasant man with good manners. He speaks good English. He had nothing to do with the military revolt of October 1936. After the murder of Bakr Sidqi in August 1937 he was appointed Chief of the General Staff. Relieved of his appointment and placed on pension in February 1940 for interference in politics.

36. *Ibrahim Hilmi al Umar.*—Sunni of Baghdad. Born 1895. Clever writer and experienced journalist. Was in Syria during the war and at one time worked for T. E. Lawrence. Came back to Baghdad in 1921 and started the *Liwa al Arab* on pro-Feisal and pro-British lines. A year later he changed sides and joined [illegible] against the first elections. Went to Persia with the [illegible] and attacked British policy in the Persian press. Returned to Baghdad in [illegible] superintendent of the Press Bureau in the Ministry of the Interior. Since [illegible] character who will do anything (or anybody) for money or drink. Ap[illegible] Acting Director of the Department of Propaganda and Publicity in the Ministry of Interior in June 1935. Placed on pension in November 1936 after the fall of [illegible] 1937 [illegible] was reinstated in his old post as Director of Propaganda and Publicity in the Ministry [illegible] of German propaganda. In June 1939 Talib Mushtaq was placed over him as Director-General of Propaganda, Publicity and Broadcasting.

37. *Ibrahim Kamal.*—Sunni. Born 1895. Captain in the Sherefian army [illegible] the first battle of Maan. Legal officer to O.C. Damascus, under [illegible] Came to Iraq with Jamil al Madfai in 1919 making propaganda for [illegible] attack on Tall Afar. He was in Damascus in April 1921, but subsequently [illegible] of British control. Was appointed commandant of police, Baghdad, on the resignation of Abdul Latif [illegible]. He did well in some ways and kept good discipline, but was removed after innumerable complaints of various kinds. [illegible] Entered Parliament [illegible] Ministry of Finance. Since then he has given no trouble. Appointed Director-General of Customs and Excise in June 1934 [illegible] Sunnis and also became [illegible] principal private secretary to King Ghazi. He was not happy in this post for long and in July 1937 reverted to the Customs Department as Director General [illegible] Petroleum Company.

Resigned with whole Cabinet in December 1938 after the military *coup* made against them by Nuri al Said.

Tried by court martial in February 1940 for being an accessory to the murder of Rustam Haidar and acquitted.

[illegible] *Usman.*—Shiah of Baghdad. Born about 1885. Well [illegible] with Yusuf Suwaidi, Muhammad Sadr, Sheikh Ahmad Zand and Ali Bazirgan [illegible] independence movement of 1920 and actively incited the tribes to rebellion. [illegible] in August 1920 and fled from Baghdad to Najaf [illegible] movements, especially the anti-mandate agitation. Minister of Commerce from [illegible] Hizb al Watani (Nationalist

party), of which he became general secretary. He was subsequently arrested and deported to Henjam, where he remained till May 1923. On his return to Baghdad he relapsed for a time into private life, and refused to join the Shiah Hizb al-Nahdhah. Returned to politics on his election to the Chamber in a Baghdad by-election June 1928. Reformed the Hizb-al-Watani (Nationalist party) September 1928. Telegraphed congratulations to the Labour party on their success in the general election in England in 1929. Lost his seat in the Chamber in the election of 1930, but remained active as the secretary-general of the Nationalist party. Resigned from the Nationalist party in October 1933 declaring that he was withdrawing from politics until there should be a change of heart among those in public life. He [illegible] January 1935 and joined with Yasin-al Hashimi and Rashid Ali-al Gilani in attacking Ali Jaudat's Cabinet. He did not, however, join them in the Cabinet formed after the latter's resignation. Elected president of the Baghdad Chamber of Commerce in November 1935.

During the summer of 1936 he became an active critic of Yasin al Hashimi's Administration and led a deputation to King Ghazi to protest against the severity of the measures taken by the Government to suppress tribal disorders in Diwaniyah. In October, after Bakr Sidqi's successful military revolt, he joined Hikmat Sulaiman's Cabinet as Minister for Finance. [illegible] against the influence of Bakr Sidqi [illegible] with which he considered that the [illegible] punitive operations against the tribes in Samawah [illegible] January 1937, but lost his seat in the summer of the same [illegible] article 31 of the Constitution.

39. *Jafar Hamandi.*—Born 1894. At the time of the outbreak of war in 1914 he was a school teacher in Baghdad. After the war he graduated at the Baghdad Law School and was appointed to a junior judgeship in Kadhimain. Later he was given an appointment in the Ministry of Justice. In 1930 he was transferred to the Ministry of the Interior and became kaimakam of Najaf, thereafter serving in several other districts he was made Mutessarif of Kut in 1936 and was later transferred to the same post in Hilla. He was appointed Minister for Education in Hikmat Sulaiman's Cabinet in June 1937. Resigned in August 1937, and in September he was appointed Director General of tribal affairs in the Ministry of the Interior.

Appointed Mutessarif of Kut September 1938, and transferred to Muntafiq February 1939, to Kerbala in September 1939.

40. *Jalal Baban.*—Kurd of the Baban family. Born 1892.

In early days of British occupation he was actively associated with extreme Nationalists and was deported to Henjam in 1920. Released in 1921. Appointed kaimakam in 1924 and [illegible] administration in the posts of mutessarif in Nasiriyah, Karbala and Arbil until November 1932 when he became Minister for Economics and Communications in Naji Shaukat's Cabinet. Became Minister for Defence under Rashid Ali-al Gilani in March 1933. Resigned with the latter in October 1933. Appointed Minister for Education in February 1934, resigned with Jamil al Madfai's Cabinet in August 1934 and was appointed Director General of the Ministry of Finance in December 1934. Transferred to be Director-General of the Ministry of Economics and Communications in June 1935. Appointed Director General of Finance in December 1936.

August 1937 he joined Jamil-al-Madfai's Cabinet as Minister for [illegible] and Communications. Resigned in May 1938 on account of insinuations made by his colleagues (not without reason) that he had made a corrupt agreement with a Government road contractor. Appointed Minister of Communications and Works in September 1939, resigned with whole Cabinet in February 1940.

41. *Jamal Baban.*—A Kurdish lawyer. Born 1890. Served for some time as a judge in the Northern Liwas. Became Deputy for Arbil in the general election of 1928. Appointed Minister for Justice in Nuri Pasha's Cabinet March 1930. Resigned with Nuri Pasha in October 1932. Reappointed Minister for Justice in Jamil Madfai's Cabinet in November 1933. Retained his portfolio when Jamil-al-Madfai reformed his Cabinet in February 1934 and remained at

the Ministry of Justice in Ali Jaudat's Cabinet formed in August 1934. Resigned with the whole Cabinet in February 1935, and in October joined the party organised by Jamil al Madfai to oppose Yasin Pasha. Owed his continued presence in successive Cabinets perhaps more to the tradition that each Cabinet must have one Kurd than to his personal abilities.

Returned for Arbil in the elections of June 1939.

42. *Jamil al Rawi.*—A Baghdadi, born 1892, officer in the Turkish army. Served in the Sherifian forces during the Arab revolt. Chief aide-de-camp to King Ali in Jedda, and came to Iraq with His Majesty after Ibn Saud's conquest of the Hejaz. Elected Deputy for Dulaim in the general election of 1928, became vice [illegible] Taqaddum party and Vice-President of the Chamber of Deputies [illegible] for Communications and Works in Nuri Pasha's Cabinet formed in March 1930. Became Minister for Defence in January 1931, but lost his portfolio when Nuri Pasha reformed his Cabinet in October 1931. Appointed Mutessarif Kirkuk July 1932. Transferred to Kut in October 1935. His services were [illegible] with by the Hashimi Cabinet in March 1936. In December 1936 he [illegible] in Jerusalem and in touch with the Grand Mufti and the Arab movement in Palestine. Appointed Iraqi Chargé d'Affaires in Jedda September 1939.

43. *Jamil al Madfai.*—Of Mosul, born about 1886. Led the party which in June 1920 came from Dair and called upon the tribes to rise against the British in the name of the Shereef. Entered Tall Afar after the murder of Captain Stuart, which he had instigated. Styled himself leader of the Northern Mesopotamian army. On the approach of British troops from Mosul returned to Dair. Returned to Iraq 1923. Soon after, appointed mutessarif and saw service in a number of different liwas. Appointed Minister for the Interior under Nuri Pasha in March 1931. Became President of the Chamber in December 1930, following Jafar Pasha's resignation. Resigned October 1931, at the same time resigning from Nuri Pasha's party as a protest against the high handed actions of Muzahim Beg A. Pachachi, then Minister for the Interior. Composed his quarrel with Nuri Pasha in November and was re-elected President of the Chamber on the 30th November. Again elected President in November 1932 and March 1933. Became Prime Minister in November 1933. Resigned in February 1934, but resumed office with a reformed Cabinet about ten days later. Resigned again in August 1934 but accepted portfolio of Defence in Cabinet which was then formed by Ali Jaudat. Became Prime Minister in March 1935, but was forced to resign by Yasin Pasha's agitation in the Euphrates after being in office for only twelve days. In October 1935 revived the party of National Unity as an opposition to Yasin Pasha's Cabinet but received little support. Declined an invitation to join the Cabinet formed by Hikmat Sulaiman in October 1936. In the winter of 1936-37 he went to the Yemen to obtain the adhesion of the Imam to the Pact of Arab Brotherhood, signed by Saudi Arabia and Iraq in April 1936, and in August 1937 after the resignation of Hikmat Sulaiman's Cabinet, he became Prime Minister.

He lacks administrative ability, but is a figure in the political world. Is generally popular because he expresses his opinion in an honest, downright manner.

Throughout 1938 he held his Cabinet together and carried on the govern- [illegible] the 25th December, 1938, by a military demonstration organised by Husain Fauz the Chief of the General Staff and Taha al Hashimi in favour of Nuri al Said. Continues to enjoy considerable political influence.

44. *Jamil al Wadi.*—Sunni of Baghdad. Brother of Hamid al-Wadi, aide-de-camp to the Amir Abdullah, and Shakir al Wadi, formerly aide-de-camp to the late King Faisal.

Appointed a judge in 1923 and became director of the Land Registry Department (Tapu) in 1931.

Appointed Minister for Justice November 1932. Resigned with Cabinet [illegible] March 1933. Appointed Director-General of State Domains Lands (in the Ministry of Finance) October 1933. Returned to the Ministry of Justice in June 1934 as member of the Court of Cassation, and a month later was appointed Chief Public Prosecutor. Appointed Director General of Posts and Telegraphs in April 1935.

Appointed principal private secretary in the Palace in July 1937, but lost this post when Hikmat Sulaiman's Cabinet fell, and was passed into obscurity as an inspector in the Ministry of Justice.

Appointed Director General of Tapu in January 1938, and of Land Settlement in August 1939 when the latter Department was amalgamated with Tapu.

45. *Kamil Chadirji.*—Sunni, born Baghdad 1901, brother of Rauf Chadirji. His sister is the wife of Mahmud Subhi-al-Daftari. Educated locally and graduated at the Law School. For a short time he held a minor post in the Ministry of Finance, but soon gave up the civil service for journalism and political agitation. In 1930 he was editor of *Al Ikha-al-Watani*, and his paper was suppressed for its attacks on Nuri Said's Government. He later edited *Al Akhbar*, which suffered the same fate as *Al Ikha al Watani*. In May 1934 he was convicted and fined £20 for publishing false news in a third newspaper, *Sawt-al-Ahali*, of which he was the responsible editor. In September of the same year he was arrested and charged with the publication of pamphlets attacking King Ghazi, but he was released a few days later as there was no evidence against him. He holds left wing views on social and political questions. He was appointed Minister for Economics and Communications in the Cabinet formed by Hikmat Sulaiman in October 1936.

He resigned in June 1937 on account of his disapproval of the Cabinet's policy on the Euphrates and left the country for several months. When he returned in the autumn he was suspected of encouraging communistic propaganda.

Nothing was heard of him during 1938-39.

46. *Khalid Sulaiman.*—Brother of Hikmat Sulaiman (q.v.). Born 1877. Returned in 1926 from Constantinople, where he had spent most of his life in [illegible] April 1925. In the reshuffle of portfolios which followed Abdul Muhsin Beg's suicide in November 1929 Khalid Beg was made Minister for Irrigation and Agriculture under Naji Pasha Suwaida. A pleasant, honest and likeable man, but has no influence in politics. Appointed Director General, Public Works Department, January 1932. Transferred to be Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs in September 1934. Appointed Iraqi Minister at Tehran March 1935.

Retired in March 1939 and now lives on his pension and looks after the affairs of his imprisoned brother Hikmat.

47. *Khalid Ismail.*—Sunni of Baghdad. Born 1903. Graduate of Law College, Baghdad. Held various positions under the Ministry of the Interior 1925-32. Appointed Secretary to the Cabinet 1932. Director General of Ministry of Interior 1935. Director-General of Education 1936. Pleasant, reasonable, speaks English well.

Appointed Director General in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in August 1937, but in October he was sent to be Mutessarif of Amarah.

Director-General of Ministry of the Interior September 1938.

48. [illegible] massacred in August 1933 in spite of their friendly [illegible] Government. He desires to leave Iraq, but does not wish to be resettled in the same place as Mar Shimun.

Since hope of moving all the Assyrians from Iraq has been abandoned, Malik Khushaba has settled down to a quiet life in his village.

49. *Muhamad Subhi Daftari.*—Sunni of Baghdad. Lawyer. Born 1890. Went with his father to Constantinople during the occupation and returned in 1919. [illegible] of the Interior as Director General of Mu[illegible] November 1936. He soon quarrelled with Arshad al Umari, the A[illegible] Wamdat [illegible] He was made a Senator in October 1937.

Pleasant, well intentioned and noticeably more moderate in politics than in his earlier day.

Became Minister of Justice in Cabinet formed by Nuri-al-Said in December 1938, but devoted more attention to his entertaining than to his official duties. Resigned February 1940 with whole Cabinet.

50. *Mahrut-bin-Hadhdhal, Shaikh.*—Chief of the Amarat, Anaiza (Arab) tribe of Iraq. He succeeded his father in 1927. Born about 1896. [illegible] proud, but wiser than he appears to be. He has endeavoured t[illegible] relations with the Iraqi Government, though the Nationalist ele[illegible] regard him with some suspicion on account of his father's close friendship with the British. His tribal area is from the Euphrates southwards to the Nejd border.

51. *Mahmud, Shaikh.*—Of the family of Barzinja Sayyidia. He has inherited from his father and grandfather great tribal and religious influence [illegible] in 1918 [illegible] British [illegible] taken [illegible] and A[illegible] al areas [illegible] 31st May [illegible] sent to live at [illegible] summer of 1933 he was permitted to take a house in Bagdad. He receives an allowance of 900 rupees a month from the Iraq Government. He has three sons, Rauf, Baba A[illegible] and Latif. Rauf is quiet and industrious and is a student in the Law College. Elected Deputy for Sulaimani in December 1938 and again in June 1[illegible] Baba Ali, after completing his secondary schooling at Victoria College in Alexandria, was sent to Columbia University, New York, to study political economy. On his return in 1938 he was given employment in the railways. Latif is the pet of his father, and will follow closely in his footsteps, if he has a chance to do so.

His properties in Sulaimani were confiscated in 1931, but restored by special Act of Parliament in December 1938.

52. *Mar Shimun.*—Eshai, Mar Shimun, Patriarch of the Assyrians (Catholicos of the Church in the East).

Born about 1909. Succeeded to the patriarchate in 1920 when a child. Educated in England at a seminary in Canterbury. Since coming of age and assuming the authority of his position, Mar Shimun has actively fostered discontent among the Assyrians. Whatever his position as the head of a spiritual community, his temporal authority is not acknowledged by a large number of Assyrians, estimated at a maximum at 12,000. His aim has been to establish the whole community in a compact enclave under his own spiritual and temporal authority. He was the inspirer of the mutiny of the levies in 1932 and of the exodus to Syria in 1933. Deported by the Iraq Government in the summer of 1933, he was given an asylum in Cyprus, where his father David and his aunt Surma joined him. In October 1933 he went to Geneva to protest to the League [illegible] went to England to obtain support from friends and sympathisers there. On his deportation King Feisal granted him and his family a provisional allowance of £780 a year, subject to his correct behaviour. This allowance was stopped by King Ghazi in the summer of 1934 on account of the propaganda which Mar Shimun persistently carried on against Iraq.

While paying lip-service to the League of Nations and always ready [illegible] revisions whenever they have conflicted with his personal ambition. By preferring temporal power to spiritual leadership, he has been the means of inflicting muc[illegible]

needless suffering on a deserving people. During the year 1934 he was mostly in England, paying several visits to Geneva when Assyrian affairs were under discussion. He remained in Europe throughout 1935 and 1936, spending much [illegible] London.

In 1939 he was granted British naturalisation and went to live in Cyprus.

53. *Maulud Mukhlis.*—Sunni. Born about 1875. A fine soldier, he behaved with great gallantry with the Sharifian army and was badly wounded. His exploits do not lose in the telling. Served in Syria and was sent in 1920 to Dair, where the agreement between the British Government of Occupation and the Arab Government was reached under his auspices in April. A hot Nationalist, he continued to spread anti British propaganda among the tribes until he was recalled by King Feisal in June. Remained in Syria after the fall of the Arab Government and returned to Bagdad in July 1921. He lost no time in joining the extreme Nationalist group. There was no post to offer him in the Iraq army, but he [illegible] occasional visits to Bagdad and Mosul to take part in Nationalist activities. In May 1923 he was appointed Mutessarif of Karbala, to deal with the Ulema. He is no administrator, but he kept things quiet at the time of the exodus of the *mujtahids*. An impulsive man, who allows his pan Arab sentiment to rule his actions. He was bitterly hostile to the Cabinet formed by Hikmat Sulaiman in October 1937 after Bakr Sidqi's *coup d'Etat* and openly condemned the murder of Jafar Pasha. In February 1937 an attempt was made to assassinate him and [illegible] Syria, but returned soon after Bakr Sidqi's murder in August 1937. Has been a Senator since 1925.

He was elected president of the Chamber in December 1937.

Attended the Arab Parliamentary Conference on Palestine arranged by Aluba Pasha in Cairo in the summer of 1938.

Re elected President of the Chamber November 1938 and again in June and November 1939.

54. *Muaffaq al Alusi.*—Born about 1894. Belongs to a learned family of Bagdad. He is a graduate of the Sorbonne whence he returned to Bagdad in [illegible] 1928 [illegible] he quarrelled with the Minister, Abdullah Damluji, and withdrew to Beirut. In 1931 he accompanied Nuri Pasha to Mecca to negotiate the Iraq Nejd "Bon Voisinage" Agreement. In the autumn of 1932 he went again to Mecca, this time to take up a post as judicial adviser to King Abdul Aziz al Saud. He remained in Arabia for about a year and then returned to Bagdad. In May 1934 he was appointed first secretary in the Iraqi Legation in Tehran [illegible] to be consul at Beirut in May 1935. Appointed consul-general at Bombay December 1936. Dismissed from the Foreign Service in November 1937.

Remained in Syria until January 1939 when he returned to Iraq. Returned to the Foreign Service in February 1939 and posted to Paris as chargé d'affaires. Transferred to be consul general at Damascus June 1939.

55. *Muhammad Ali Mahmud.*—Sunni. Born 1895. A lawyer who has served in many posts under the Ministry of Justice, including that of Director-General of the Ministry, Director General of Tapu and judge of the Court of Appeal. Elected to the Chamber as Deputy for Bagdad in 1935 and for Arbil in 1936. Has twice been elected Vice-President of the Chamber and held the post of [illegible]rman of the Finance Committee in 1937. Appointed Minister of Finance in [illegible]mat Sulaiman's reformed Cabinet in June 1937. He resigned in August 1937 [illegible]

Elected Deputy for Arbil December 1937 but lost his seat in June 1939.

56. *Muhammad Amin Zaki.*—A Kurd of Sulaimani. Born 1880. Well educated and speaks French, German and English. Formerly staff officer in [illegible] 1926, and subsequently held the portfolios of Education and Defence. Exerted little influence in the Cabinets in which he has held office. His policy is to try to please the Kurds by supporting Kurdish Nationalists without compromising his [illegible] 1930. Again Minister for Economics and Communications July 1931. Resigned

[illegible] Appointed Director-General of Economics and Communications March 1933, but became unemployed when this post was abolished in September 1934. Became Minister for Economics and Communications in March 1935 in Yasin Pasha's Cabinet. Resigned when the Cabinet fell in October 1936.

Elected Deputy for Sulaimani in December 1937 and again in June 1939. Became Minister for Economics in March 1939 in Rashid Ali's third Cabinet.

57. *Muhammad Husain Kashif al Ghata (Sayid).* Shiah Alim of Najaf. One of the few Arab Divines of importance.

Attended the Moslem Conference at Jerusalem in 1931 as Iraqi delegate. Visited Persia on a prolonged tour in the summer of 1933, and returned to Iraq in February 1934. In the spring of 1935 he took a prominent part in the tribal [illegible] up arms against Yasin Pasha's Government. He hoped to persuade them to make a united front with the Ulama in an attempt to force on the Government a series of sectarian demands intended to secure for the Shiah community a greater share in the government of the country. He was only partially successful and, after the defeat of the tribes by the army, he wisely withdrew to silence in the shrines of Najaf.

Declared a jihad for Palestine in the summer of 1938.

In 1939 it was suspected that he had accepted money from the German Legation to foster anti British feeling.

58. *Muhammad Ridha al Shabibi.*—Shiah of Bagdad, born about 1880. Belongs to a well known family. Member of Constituent Assembly and Minister [illegible] tion in Yasin Pasha's Cabinet in 1924. Again given the portfolio of Education in the Cabinet formed by Yasin Pasha in March 1935. His reactionary views soon brought him into conflict with his colleagues and with the chief permanent officials of his Ministry, and he resigned in September 1935. He became President of the Senate, February 1937, and was reappointed Minister for Education in Jamil al Madfai's Cabinet in August 1937. He is president of the Bagdad branch of the Pen Club and has a considerable reputation as a man of letters. Resigned with Jamil al Madfai in December 1938.

59. *Muhammad Salih al Qazaz.*—Bagdad Mechanic. Born about 1898. Has recently come into prominence as a labour leader and agitator. A professional demagogue, he always thrusts himself in the van of any bazaar troubles, and has been especially conspicuous in encouraging discontent among the labour employed by the foreign companies operating in Iraq. Played a leading part in organising the boycott of the Bagdad Electric Light Company in the autumn and winter of 1936.

During the premiership of Yasin al Hashimi he was not allowed to agitate, but when Hikmat Sulaiman came into office in October 1936 Muhammad Salih became the treasurer of the Popular Reform League which was organised by Kamil Chadirji with a left wing programme. His activities became so tiresome that in February 1937 he was sent to live in Ramadi, where he remained until December 1937 when he was released.

60. *Muhammad al Sadr, Sayid.*—Born about 1885. An influential Shiah divine of Kadhimain. Was a violent Nationalist in the early days of the British occupation, and played a prominent part in the insurrection of 1920. He fled to Syria when the insurrection was put down, but returned with the Amir Feisal in June 1921. Took an active part in the anti-mandate controversy of 1922, but [illegible] ter the proclamation of the Constitution in 1924 greatly modified his views. [illegible] 1929 [illegible] has subsequently been re-elected to this position at each new session, until February 1937, when Ridha al Shabibi was elected instead. He was re-elected President of the Senate in December 1937 and again in December 1937, June 1939 and November 1939.

61. *Musa Shabandar.*—Bagdadi Sunni, born 1899.

Elder son of Mahmud Shabandar, a wealthy land and property owner of Bagdad.

Went to Berlin soon after the armistice, and has since been living in Europe mostly in Zurich and Berlin. Has frequently contributed anti British articles to the Bagdad press, using the pen-name of "Alwan Abu Sharara."

Came to Bagdad in autumn of 1932, and in January 1933 was appointed [illegible] rmanent Iraqi delegation at the League of Nations [illegible] glish, French and German. Appointed first secretary to the Iraqi Legation in Berlin in October 1935.

Early in 1937 he was accused of giving certificates of export to Iraq for munitions destined for Spain and recalled to Bagdad, where he was placed under arrest. In December proceedings against him were dropped and it seems doubtful whether there was ever any real evidence against him. Elected Deputy for Amarah December 1937.

Lost his seat in June 1939. Reappointed to the Diplomatic Service in June 1939 and sent as Chargé d'Affaires to Berlin. Returned to Bagdad October 1939 and was appointed Assistant Director General in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Capable and helpful.

62. *Mustafa al Umari.*—Sunni of the Umari family of Mosul. Born 1893. Graduated in Law School in Bagdad just before the war. Served as an officer in [illegible] prisoner just before the fall of Bagdad. Returned to Iraq after the armistice and entered Government service. Since then he has served in the Waqf Department and in the Ministries of Finance and Interior. His posts include the following: kaimakam in several districts, Accountant General, Director General of the Ministry of the Interior and mutessarif in a number of liwas. In 1936 he was appointed Mutessarif of the Muntafiq liwa and in June 1937 he joined Hikmat Sulaiman's Cabinet as Minister of the Interior. He retained this portfolio in the Cabinet formed by Jamil Madfai in August 1937.

During the first half of 1938 he acquired a reputation for taking large bribes, and, though no allegations were proved, the Prime Minister thought it well to transfer him to another Ministry. He accordingly went to Justice in October 1938. In December 1938 he resigned with the whole of Jamil al Madfai's Cabinet after the military demonstration organised by Husain Fauzi and Taha al Hashimi in favour of Nuri al Said. He is a Senator.

63. *Muzahim al Amin Pachachi.*—Sunni of Bagdad. Born 1888, a lawyer. Elected Deputy for Hillah in the Constituent Assembly March 1924 and sat in the first Chamber in 1925. Minister of Communications and Works in the Hashimi Cabinet, August 1924. In 1927 while in London, he made a close study of British politics. Recalled to Bagdad in February 1928 and joined the active Nationalists. His ideas seemed to be tinged with communism. Was prominent in anti Zionist manifestations in summer of 1929. Became Minister of Economics and Communications in January 1931, and, shortly after, Minister of the Interior, in which post he unexpectedly gave satisfaction to his British advisers. Resigned October 1931 on account of a difference with his colleagues regarding his dismissal of the Amin al Asimah. Towards the end of May 1932 he was charged [illegible] and was committed for trial with four others by Bagdad magistrate's court. Acquitted in October 1932. In October 1934 he was appointed Minister at Rome [illegible] duties at Geneva. Appointed Minister at Paris in July 1939.

64. *Dr Naji al Asil.*—Bagdadi, born 1895. First became prominent in 1922 as semi-official Hashimite representative in London. Continued to represent Hashimite interests in London until final conquest of the Hejaz by Ibn Saud. Dr Naji then became destitute in England, and was deported to Iraq in October 1925. In Iraq he was soon employed under the Ministry of Defence in the Iraqi Military Medical Service. Appointed Iraqi Consul General and Chargé d'Affaires [illegible] the visit of the Amir Feisal, son of King Abdul Aziz al Saud. Appointed consul, Mohammerah, October 1932. Acting Director General in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, April 1933. Appointed counsellor in the Legation at Tehran April 1935.

In June 1936, while on leave in Bagdad, he was appointed Master of Ceremonies at the palace, and accepted the portfolio of Foreign Affairs when Hikmat Sulaiman formed his Cabinet in October 1936. Resigned with Hikmat Sulaiman in August 1937, and was not included in the Cabinet formed by Jamil al Madfai.

A pleasant man of considerable intelligence.

65. *Naji Shaukat.*—Sunni of Bagdad, born 1891. Studied in Constantinople and became a reserve officer. Joined the Sharif and was at Aqabah with Colonel Lawrence, for whom he has a great admiration. Returned to Bagdad in 1919. Early in 1921 he was given an appointment under the Mutessarif of Bagdad, and subsequently became mutessarif. He showed considerable administrative ability, and maintained cordial relations with his British advisers. He was appointed Mutessarif of Kut in October 1922, of Hillah in 1923, and of Bagdad in 1924. Minister for Interior, June 1928, Minister for Justice, September 1929, and reverted to Interior in the changes which followed Abdul Muhsin's suicide. Appointed Iraqi Minister at Angora in September 1930. Recalled to Bagdad in October 1931 to take up portfolio of Interior. Became Prime Minister in November 1932. Received the Order of Grand Officer of the Crown of Italy in January 1933. Resigned premiership March 1933. Minister for the Interior in November 1933, resigned February 1934. Again appointed Minister at Angora April 1934. He accompanied Taufiq Rustu Aras, the Turkish [illegible] Foreign Affairs, on his official visit to Bagdad in the summer of [illegible] was then offered a Cabinet post in Hikmat Sulaiman's [illegible] because of his objection to Bakr Sidqi's influence.

Became Minister of the Interior in the Cabinet formed by Nuri al Said in December 1939, but resigned in April 1939. Deputy for Bagdad in the elections of June 1939.

Became Minister for Justice in Rashid Ali's Cabinet in March 1940.

66. *Naji al Suwaidi.*—Born in Bagdad 1883. Educated at Bagdad and in the school of law at Constantinople. Speaks French and English. Public Prosecutor in the Yaman 1905, president of the Commercial Tribunal, Basra, 1908, member of the Bagdad Court of Appeal 1910; Kaimakam of Kadhimain 1910–11; of Najaf 1911, and of Hindiyah 1912. Civil Inspector for Diarbekr, Urfa and Mardin, 1913. Inspector for the Eastern Region (Adana to Mosul) 1915. Civil Inspector of the Adana Vilayet 1916, whence he was transferred to Konia. Civil Inspector in the Ministry of the Interior, Constantinople, 1917. Returned to Syria after the armistice and was appointed Deputy Military Governor of Bagdad, but resigned the appointment after a few days and returned to his former post in Aleppo. Returned to Bagdad in March 1921, and was active in the preparations for the reception of the Amir Faisal. Was appointed Minister of Justice in September 1921 and held the post till November 1923, having served for a short time also as Minister of Interior. Deputy for Bagdad in the Constituent Assembly, March 1924. He opposed the treaty and voted against it. Became Prime Minister in November 1929. His Cabinet resigned in March 1930. Re-elected for Bagdad in the general election of 1930, but resigned his seat March 1931 as a protest against the alleged unconstitutional conduct of the Government. Accompanied King Feisal to Tehran in April 1932. Appointed Senator January 1933. Joined Jamil Madfai's Cabinet in February 1934 as Minister for Finance, and resigned with his colleagues in August 1934. He [illegible] against the policy of His Majesty's Government in Palestine, and on returning to Iraq reorganised and strengthened the Palestine Defence League.

[illegible] useful work on Government committees.

Became Minister of Finance in the Cabinet formed by Rashid Ali al Gilani in March 1940.

67. *Nosrat al Farsi.*—Lawyer of Bagdad, born about 1890. In the early days of the Iraqi Government he held somewhat extreme Nationalist views, which he voiced as a Deputy in the Chamber. Was later given an appointment in the [illegible]

Minister for Finance, November 1932. Resigned with Naji Beg Shaukat in March 1933. Appointed Minister for Finance in Jamil Beg Al Madfai's [illegible] General of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in April 1935. Appointed Iraqi [illegible] at Geneva in June 1937.

Steady and intelligent, but inclined to be obstructive.

Was relieved of this appointment in the summer of 1938 when it was decided to withdraw the Iraqi delegation from Geneva. He then returned to the Bar.

68. *Nizhat al Sawaqi.*—Sunni of Bagdad, born 1893. Studied in the School of Law, Constantinople. He was in Bagdad before the occupation, went to Mosul with the Turks, and was employed in various capacities there. Returned after the armistice and took service under the British Administration. Was appointed Director of the Law School when it was reopened in 1919, criminal magistrate, February 1922, judge in the Court of Appeal, March 1923. Amin al-Asimah, Bagdad 1925–30. Appointed Director-General in the Ministry of [illegible] April 1930, and became Principal of the Law School, February [illegible] Reappointed Director-General in the Ministry of the Interior, November 1931. Appointed Administrative Inspector, November 1933. Became Director-General of Municipalities in June 1935.

Appointed Chief Finance Inspector, May 1938. Placed on pension about end of 1938.

69. *Nuri al Said.*—Sunni of Bagdad, born 1888, son of an accountant of Mosul descent. Educated in Constantinople, speaks Turkish, German, French and English. Served in Balkan War. He was one of the founders of the Ahd in 1913, and came from Constantinople to Iraq in order to start branches there. He was in Basra at the time of the occupation as a patient in the American hospital, joined the Arab army in the Hejaz in June 1916, and commanded the troops till the arrival of Jafar Pasha (his brother-in-law); served as C.G.S. till the fall of Damascus. A good strategist very receptive of ideas, clever, hard-working, rash and hot-headed under fire. A modernist with an exceptionally alert intelligence. Was awarded the D.S.O. 1917 and the C.M.G. 1919, and accompanied Feisal in London, Paris and Syria in 1919 and 1920. He always wished for a reasonable rapprochement between the French and the Arabs, and dissuaded King Feisal from offering resistance to the French on the ground that he could not hope for support from the British. When the break came in July 1920 he went with Feisal to England. Returned to Bagdad in February 1921 and took charge of the Ministry of Defence during the absence of Jafar Pasha at the Cairo Conference. On his return he became C.G.S. and Director General of Police, and held these appointments till October 1922. Acting Minister of Defence from November 1922 to November 1923. Held the same portfolio [illegible] Jafar Pasha's Cabinet. Minister of Defence again in November 1920 [illegible] retained that portfolio with only short intervals out of office until he became Prime Minister in March 1930. Negotiated and signed the Anglo Iraqi Treaty of June 1930. Visited Jedda in 1931 to negotiate a "Bon Voisinage" Treaty with Nejd and the Hejaz. Resigned with the whole Cabinet the 19th October, 1931, but reassumed office on the same day in a reformed Cabinet. Visited Ang[illegible] with King Feisal July 1931, and again in December–January 1931–32. During [illegible] visit he signed with Turkish Government an Extradition Treaty, a Treaty of Commerce and a Residence Convention. Resigned premiership in October 1932. Appointed Minister at Rome, February 1933, but did not proceed. Became Minister for Foreign Affairs in Cabinet of Rashid Ali Gilani in March 1933. Resigned with Rashid Ali in October 1933 and accepted portfolio of Foreign Affairs and Defence under Jamil al Madfai in November 1933. Resigned in February 1934, but returned to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in August 1934 under Ali Jaudat's premiership. Resigned with Ali Jaudat in February 1935, but retained the portfolio of Foreign Affairs in the succeeding Cabinet formed by Jamil al Madfai, and returned again to the Ministry in the Cabinet formed by Yasin Pasha in March 1935.

In October, after Bakr Sidqi's successful military revolt, Nuri Pasha, fearing for his life, fled to Egypt with his family, where he carried on a restless [illegible] from Cairo to secure his return to Iraq. He came back in October 1937 [illegible] He was offered the post of Iraqi Minister in London, but did not accept it. In [illegible] for a solution of the problem of the future of the Jews and Arabs in Palestine.

But for two short visits to Bagdad, Nuri al-Said spent the whole of the year 1938 outside Iraq, occupied principally in desultory conversations about Palestine with politicians in Syria, Egypt and London. On each of his short [illegible] to Bagdad his presence gave rise to rumours concerning his political intentions, but these died away as soon as he left.

In December 1938 he came back to stay, and a few days later a military [illegible] overthrew Jamil al Madfai's Cabinet and brought Nuri al Said into office as

Prime Minister. He represented Iraq at the opening of the London conversations about Palestine in January 1939

Resigned the premiership in February 1940, but at the Regent's request reformed his Cabinet and continued in office until the end of March, when, with his own collaboration, a new Cabinet was formed by Rashid Ali

70. *Rashid Ali-al-Gilani.*—Sunni of Bagdad, born 1892. A distant relation of the Naqib. In Turkish times was a clerk in the Waqf Department. Fled to Mosul with the Turks on the [illegible] practised as a lawyer. In Mo[illegible] as a protest [illegible] Brotherhood). He encoura[illegible] embarrass Nuri Pasha's Cabinet [illegible] in July 1932. Became Prime Minister in March 1933. Resign[illegible] Appointed Senator in summer of 1934. Helped to organise the disturbances on the Euphrates which forced Ali Jaudat to resign in March 1935 and as Minister for the Interior, joined the Cabinet then formed by Yasin-al-Hashimi

After Bakr Sidqi's military revolt against the Hashimite Cabinet in October 1936 Rashid Ali fled to Constantinople. He came back in October 1937

During 1939 he made several speeches in the Senate attacking the policy of Jamil al Madfai's Cabinet

Deported to Anah December 1938. Returned a few days later when Nuri-al-Said succeeded Jamil-al Madfai as Prime Minister. Appointed chief private secretary to the Palace in January 1939 and remained in this post after King Ghazi's death in April 1939. Became Prime Minister in March 1940

71. *Rashid-al Khojah.*—Sunni of Bagdad. Born 1884. Staff officer in Turkish army. Came to Damascus after the armistice. Prominent member of the Ahd al-Iraqi. He returned to Bagdad in November 1920 and was appointed mutessarif in January 1921. He is weak and much under the thumb of the extreme National group. In February 1922 he was appointed mutessarif of Mosul where he was completely under the influence of Mustafa Sabunji. As his presence in a frontier division was considered inexpedient by the Iraqi Government, he was removed and reappointed mutessarif of Bagdad. Appointed Iraqi consul-general at Cairo October 1928, and Director General of Education January 1930. Consul-general Beirut, August 1931. Chargé d'Affaires and consul general at Jedda [illegible] Naji Shaukat, November 1932. Resigned with Naji Shaukat's Cabinet in March 1933. Elected President of the Chamber of Deputies November 1933 after resignation of Jamil al-Madfai. Reappointed Minister of Defence in February 1934, resigned with Jamil al Madfai's Cabinet in August 1934. Re-elected President of the Chamber in December 1934. Again appointed Minister for Defence in Jamil al Madfai's Cabinet in March 1935, but resigned with the whole Cabinet after being only twelve days in office. Elected to the Chamber in August 1935 and joined the Opposition led by Jamil al Madfai. Appointed principal private secretary in the Palace in September 1937

Appointed Director-General of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs by Nuri-al Said's Cabinet in January 1939

72. [illegible] about 1897. Graduated at the Bagdad Law School and was appointed to a clerical post in the Ministry of Finance, where he rose to be Accountant General (not altogether by merit). Appointed Minister for Finance in Yasin Pasha's Cabinet in March 1935

Resigned October 1936

Appointed Director General of Customs and Excise January 1938. Became Minister of Finance in February 1940 and of Social Affairs in March.

73. *Rauf-al Chadirji.*—Sunni of Bagdad. He was Mayor of Bagdad at the time of the cutting of New Street and earned a great deal of personal unpopularity thereby. Left for Berlin shortly before the occupation, and subsequently went to Switzerland, returning to Bagdad in the summer of 1920, up to which time permission to return had been refused him. Speaks French, English and German well. He set up practice as a barrister and consorted much with British officials. He took no part in the Nationalist agitation; nevertheless, when his father was deported to Constantinople in August, he was asked to return with him. He came back in 1921 and resumed his legal work without taking any part in politics. He has most of the business of foreign firms in his hands owing to his knowledge of [illegible] home in September. A retiring man of modernist opinions. Deputy for Hilla in the Constituent Assembly in March 1924. He was strongly opposed to the passage of the treaty without amendments and voted against it. Chosen director of the law school August 1924. Minister of Finance. Second Saduniyah Cabinet and afterwards became Minister of Justice in Jafar Pasha's Cabinet in November [illegible] Angora in December 1930, and returned to Bagdad as legal adviser to the Iraq Petroleum Company

Appointed Iraqi Minister in London in December 1936, and proceeded to his post early in 1937. Resigned March 1940 and remained in England, where he is a well paid post with the Iraq Petroleum Company

A cultured, likeable and intelligent man

74. *Rauf-al Kubaisi.*—Sunni, of Kubaisah origin. Born 1885. He was [illegible] work in keeping order before the advent of the French in July 1920. Refused office under the French and returned to Bagdad in February 1921. He was appointed Kaimakam of Suq in November 1921 but was removed in June. He then for a time joined the extreme Nationalist group in Bagdad. Appointed Director General of Prisons in 1924 and subsequently played no part in politics. [illegible] 1930. [illegible] 1931. Appointed Director-General of Auqaf in summer of 1933, and Director General of Census in November 1937

Mutessarif of Bagdad November 1938 and Director-General of Auqaf April 1939. Resigned June 1940

75. *Sabih Najib.*—Born 1892. Gazetted to the Turkish army in 1912, joined Iraqi army 1921, and reached the rank of lieutenant-colonel 1929. Posted a staff [illegible] in Bagdad. Speaks English and French and some German. Appointed Director-General of Police in March 1931. Represented Iraq on the Syria-Iraq Frontier Delimitation Commission in 1933. Appointed counsellor, Berlin, June 1935. Transferred to Geneva as Iraqi delegate to the League of Nations in November 1935

He was appointed Director-General of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in December 1937 with the rank of Minister Plenipotentiary

Made Minister for Defence in October 1938. Resigned with the whole Jamil al Madfai Cabinet the 25th December 1938

Tried by court martial in February 1940 for being an accessory to the murder of Rustam Haidar Minister of Finance. Acquitted on this charge and sentenced to one year's imprisonment [illegible] of the Government at a semi-public gathering. Was pardoned by [illegible] after serving only a few weeks of his sentence.

76. *Sadiq-al Bassam.*—Shiah of Bagdad. Born 1895. Graduated at the Bagdad Law School and for several years practised as a lawyer. Deputy for Kut 1930-34. In the Chamber he gave steady support to Yasin Pasha, and was a member of the Ikha al Watani party. In June 1935, as a reward for his political services, he was appointed Director General of Government Lands and Properties in the Ministry of Finance, and became Minister of Education in Yasin Pasha's Cabinet in September 1935. Resigned in October 1936

Elected Deputy for Kut December 1937 and for Bagdad in June 1939. Became Minister [illegible] October 1939. Jamil [illegible] Cabinet formed by Rashid Ali in March 1940 as Minister of Education

77. *Said bin Ali.* Mir (chief) of the Yazidis. Lives at Baadra near Mosul. Weak character, drinks heavily and indulges in every sort of vice. Much under the control of his mother, Maiyana, who is a woman of personality and was at one time a noted beauty. The Yazidis are dissatisfied with Said Beg on account of his profligate living, and from time to time there is a movement to depose him and substitute another member of the ruling family. So far, however, traditional loyalty has been strong enough to keep Said in his position.

78. *Said-al Haji Thabit.* Born Mosul 1883, Sunni. Merchant. Elected Deputy for Mosul 1925. Delegate to the Islamic Congress in Jerusalem 1931. Deputy 1933-34-35. Nationalist. He has taken a prominent part in all movements in Iraq in support of the Arabs in Palestine. President of the Palestine Defence Society, which is particularly active in raising money for the Arabs of Palestine. He attended the Bludan Arab Congress in August 1937.

Elected Deputy for Mosul June 1939.

79. *Salah al Din Ali al Sabbagh.*—Born about 1896. Educated at Istanbul and graduated as an officer from the Turkish Military College. Taken prisoner in the war 1914-18 and released to join the Amir Feisal's army. Gazetted second lieutenant in the Iraqi army 1921. Has done courses at Belgam and Sheerness and also attached to British units. Instructor at Bagdad Military [redacted] September 1937, and became O.C. 3rd Division March 1940. Is an efficient officer, but has the reputation of being a careerist with ambition.

Belongs to the group of senior officers who are particularly active in politics.

80. *Salman-al Barrak.*—A tribal notable of Hillah. Minister of Irrigation and Agriculture 1928-29. Has been in the Chamber of Deputies for many years and has frequently held position of Vice-President.

81. *Salih Jabr.*—Shiah lawyer of Najaf, born about 1890. Employed for some time as a judge. Elected Deputy February 1930 and resigned from the bench. Acquired notoriety in the Chamber as a persistent asker of questions and ready speaker. Appointed Minister for Education under Jamil Madfai November 1933. Resigned February 1934. Elected Deputy for Muntafiq December 1934. Appointed Mutasarrif of Karbala in April 1935, where he proved [redacted] Sulaiman's Cabinet. Resigned in June over the Euphrates disturbances and went away for several months. He returned when Jamil al Madfai formed a Cabinet and was appointed Director-General of Customs and Excise.

Became Minister for Education in Cabinet formed by Nuri al Said in December 1938. Elected for Diwaniyah June 1939. Minister for Social Affairs in February 1940. Resigned in March 1940.

82. *Sami Shaukat.* Born Bagdad 1893. Sunni. Brother of Naji Shaukat. Graduated at Military College of Medicine, Constantinople, 1916. Joined the Arab army in Syria in 1919. Appointed to Iraqi Health Service 1921 and subsequently served for several years as Director-General of Education. Became Director-General of Public Health in 1936. An ardent Arab Nationalist.

Appointed Director-General of Education in March 1939. He has done much to increase military education in the secondary schools. Became the first Minister for Social Affairs in September 1939 and Minister for Education in February 1940. Resigned in March with whole Cabinet and was reappointed Director-General of Education in April 1940.

[redacted] Served as an officer in the Turkish army from 1915 to the armistice. [redacted] and in 1930 he was promoted major and [redacted] Feisal. He was on King Feisal's staff during His [redacted] in 1933. Promoted lieutenant-colonel in 1935 [redacted] Returned to Iraq 1936 and was appointed [redacted] murder in August 1937 he was appointed [redacted] but a few weeks later he was dismissed and placed [redacted]

Banished from Bagdad in December 1938 for intrigues against Jamil al Madfai's Government, but permitted to return in January 1939 after Nuri al Said had formed a Government. Appointed to the Iraqi diplomatic service in June 1939 as second secretary to the Iraqi Legation, Tehran. Has been in charge of the legation since his appointment and has done well.

84. *Taha-al Hashimi.*—Brother of the late Yasin-al Hashimi. Born 1888. Served in Turkish army and was employed in Arabia and the Yemen during the war. Was given a post on the Turkish General Staff in Constantinople in 1920, but returned to Bagdad in 1922 to join the Iraqi army, and was at once appointed Officer Commanding Troops in Mosul. Appointed chief of the General Staff and came to Bagdad in 1923. Was attached to Sir Percy Cox in May 1924 for the boundary negotiations with the Turkish Government which followed the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne. The post of chief of the General Staff was abolished shortly after his return in August 1924, and for a while he acted as tutor to the [redacted] and Director of Education in 1928. In 1930 he returned as chief of the General [redacted] visited the Imam Yahiyah of the Yemen and concluded a treaty of friendship between the Yemen and Iraq.

He is popular with the British officers of the military mission. In September 1935 he was appointed Acting Director-General of Education in addition to his other duties.

He was in Angora in October 1936 when Hikmat Sulaiman and Bakr Sidqi forced Yasin al Hashimi to resign and wisely did not return to Iraq. He came back in September 1937 and was offered the post of Director-General of Works. He refused this offer on the ground that it was beneath his dignity to accept any position lower than that of Chief of the General Staff.

Elected Deputy for Bagdad in December 1937. Opposed Jamil al Madfai's Cabinet in the Chamber. Worked actively on the committee of the Palestine Defence League in 1938. On the 25th December, 1938, in collaboration with General Husain Fauzi, he organised a military demonstration against Jamil al [redacted] Bagdad in the elections of June 1939. Retained the portfolio of Defence in the Cabinet formed by Rashid Ali in March 1940.

[redacted]

In June 1936 he was compelled to resign from the palace on account of the [redacted] to the Iraqi Legation in Tehran and took up his post in November 1936. [redacted]

Appointed Director of Ceremonies in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in February 1939. Became consul-general in Beirut in July 1939.

86. *Talib Mushtaq.*—Sunni of Bagdad, born 1900. Father was minor official [redacted] of those responsible for anti-British posters issued over the signature of the Supreme Committee of Iraq Secret Societies. Appointed Inspector of Schools [redacted] November 1931, when he was appointed first secretary to the Iraqi Legation at [redacted] Foreign [redacted] in November 1935. Appointed consul-general at Beirut in August 1937.

Withdrawn and dismissed from the service in February 1938. He remained [redacted] General of Propaganda, Publicity and Broadcasting in May 1939. Became consul-general in Jerusalem May 1940.

87. *Taufiq al Suwaidi*.—Born 1889. Studied law in Bagdad and Constantinople and international law in Paris. In 1913 became first interpreter to the Ministry of Education, Constantinople. Represented Iraq at the Arab Conference held in Paris in July 1913. After the armistice went to Syria and was appointed judge in Damascus. Returned to Bagdad in October 1921 and in November was appointed Assistant Government Counsellor and Director of the Law School. Minister for Education January 1928. Prime Minister 1929. President of the Chamber 1929. Iraqi Minister at Tehran March 1931. Joined Jamil al Madfai's Cabinet in July 1934 as Minister for Foreign Affairs, but resigned with the whole Cabinet in August. Held Cabinet office for twelve days as Minister for Justice in Jamil al Madfai's short lived Cabinet in March 1935, and in October was appointed Comptroller General of Accounts. He became Minister for Foreign Affairs in Jamil al Madfai's Cabinet in August 1937, and headed the Iraqi delegation to the League of Nations in September. There he handled the Assyrian and Palestinian questions with tact and moderation.

Again represented Iraq at the League of Nations in the autumn of 1938, and afterwards visited London as the guest of His Majesty's Government. There he had conversations with the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and with the Secretary of State for the Colonies about Palestine.

Resigned with the whole of Jamil al Madfai's Cabinet on the 25th December 1938, as the result of a military demonstration made against them. Represented Iraq at the London conversations on Palestine in 1939 after Nuri al Said had returned to Iraq.

88. *Thabit Abdul Nur*.—Born 1890. Son of Aziz Abdul Nur, a prominent Jacobite Christian of Mosul. He was christened Nikola. Was an officer in the Turkish army, embezzled money and fled to Syria to join Sherefian cause. At this time he changed his name to Thabit, became a Moslem and performed the [illegible] in extreme Nationalist politics. Elected Deputy for Mosul in general election [illegible] 1930, and appointed Director of Oil Affairs in the Ministry of Economics and Communications in June 1931. The post was abolished in March 1933. Tried in 1932 for misappropriating the funds of the Agricultural Exhibition (April 1932), but acquitted.

Appointed counsellor in the Iraqi Legation in London December 1933. This [illegible] July 1934. Appointed Director of Oil Affairs in the Ministry of Economics and Communications in June 1935. His post was abolished in November 1936, and he remained without employment until December 1937, when he was appointed to the Iraqi Diplomatic Service.

Early in 1938 he was appointed Iraqi Chargé d'Affaires at Jedda. There he [illegible] tor which he had been given no authority by the Iraqi Government. The Saudi Government soon detected the folly of his schemes and gave up taking him seriously. In December 1938 and January 1939 he was in Sanaa visiting the King of the Yemen.

He was on leave in Germany on the outbreak of war in September 1939 and [illegible] the preparation of Arabic broadcasts from Berlin.

89. *Umar Nazmi*.—Born Kifri 1893. Graduated at the Bagdad Law College 1913. Appointed Judge, Khaniqin 1919, Baqubah 1914; on the outbreak of the war [illegible] Kirkuk 1924, Vice-President, Civil Courts, Mosul 1924, Hillah 1925, President, Civil Courts, Diala; Mutessarif of Kirkuk Liwa 1927, Mutessarif of Kut and Basra Liwas; Administrative Inspector 1931; Mutessarif of Mosul Liwa 1934.

Held other Government posts up to August 1937, when he was made to be Director-General of Revenues. Became a Minister of Economics and Communications in December 1938 in the Cabinet of Nuri al Said.

Made a Senator April 1939. Minister of Interior in September 1939 and Acting Minister of Justice in February 1940. Joined Rashid Ali's Cabinet in March 1940 as Minister of Communications and Works.

90. *Yunis Bahri*.—Born about 1894. Of the Jubur tribe of Mosul. From his early days he has been well known for his unprincipled character and immoral private life. From 1923 to 1926 he held minor clerical posts in Government offices. In June 1926 he went on a journey round the world and was repatriated destitute from Paris after having served a term of imprisonment for a misdemeanour. Between 1929 and 1933 he travelled in Arab countries, including Tripoli, Tunis and the Hadhramaut, and also Java, India, Afghanistan and Iran. On his return to Iraq he took up journalism and gave his support to extreme nationalism. He also published a newspaper called *Al Uqab*. He was subsidised in 1935-36 to publish articles favouring the Italian conquest of Abyssinia and in 1936 he sold himself to the German Legation. In April 1939 he went to Berlin and soon afterwards became the announcer of the Berlin Arabic broadcast.

In this position he has been very successful, and his broadcasts are a powerful instrument of German propaganda.

91. *Yusuf Ghanimah*.—An intelligent and hardworking Chaldean Catholic of Bagdad, born about 1890. Diminutive and unimpressive, he mixes freely with Moslems and was made Minister for Finance in January 1928, after having shown [illegible] Has sat in Parliament for Bagdad since the first election. Lost his seat in the Chamber in the general election of 1930, and then began to take part in the [illegible] Director-General of Revenues in the Ministry of Finance, December 1932, and Director-General of the Ministry in 1933. Became Minister for Finance in [illegible] February 1935. Appointed Director-General of Finance in June 1935.

Appointed general manager of the Agricultural Industrial Bank in December 1936.

92. *Yusuf Izz-al Din*.—Sunni. Son of Ibrahim Pasha, a Kurd of Sulaimani. Born Bagdad 1891. Married to the daughter of Ali Agha of Sulaimani. Owns [illegible] ty in Bagdad, Amara and Sulaimani. Educated locally and entered the [illegible] civil service in 1918. Graduated at the Law School in 1927. Became a finance [illegible] pector in 1928 and was promoted Assistant Director-General of Finance in 1930. Became Director-General of Land Settlement June 1934, Accountant-General June 1935. Appointed Minister of Education in Hikmat Sulaiman's Cabinet in October 1936. He resigned in July 1937 because of his dissatisfaction with the Cabinet's policy on the Euphrates and with Bakr Sidqi's influence over the Prime Minister.

Obituary

The following person included in the personalities for 1939 has died since July 1939:—

Rustam Haidar.

E 2403/495/93] No. 204

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received August 14.)

No. 328.)

My Lord, *Bagdad, July 12, 1940.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that early in July the Supreme Defence Council of the Iraqi Government met to consider a formal communication which I had made to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, informing him that in accordance with the terms of article 4 of the Treaty of Alliance of 1930, His [illegible] to disembark [illegible] of Bagdad an [illegible] Chief of the Ge[illegible] of [illegible] Minister [illegible]

situated west of the Euphrates river beginning from the Basra Gulf or *vice versa*. The question concerning the use of the Tigris river, and the railway between Bagdad and Mosul for the transit of British forces is outside the scope of the treaty.

3. General Waterhouse ascertained that the Defence Council had based their decision in particular on the last paragraph of Sir Francis Humphrys' letter of the 15th July, 1930, written from the Colonial Office to General Nuri Said (who as Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs was at that time, I understand, visiting London) a copy of which was sent to the Acting High Commissioner in Iraq with Lord Passfield's confidential despatch of the 18th July, 1930.

4. I discussed the matter with General Nuri himself a few days later. He assured me that there was no need for me to take official action as he would himself dispose of the misunderstanding that had evidently arisen during his absence. He said that he quite understood that the last paragraph of Sir Francis Humphrys' letter referred to ultimate destinations and not to the precise routes to be followed, and added that so far as he could remember the purpose of this paragraph was to make it clear that the troops would not be proceeding to Iran or Turkey. Moreover, he agreed that such matters were fully covered in war-time by the comprehensive last sentence of article 4 of the Treaty of Alliance of 1930. The British Adviser to the Ministry of the Interior has confirmed me that he does not believe that the Prime Minister (who is also Minister of the Interior) wishes for his part to obstruct the passage of British troops through Iraq.

5. In view of the assurances from the Minister for Foreign Affairs, I trust that I shall hear no more of quibbles of this kind, but I should be glad to receive—for any purpose for which it may be useful in the future—an authoritative explanation of the true significance of the somewhat curiously worded reply that was given to the second of the three enquiries made in the second paragraph of Sir Francis Humphrys' confidential despatch of the 1st July, 1930, to Lord Passfield.

I have, &c.
BASIL NEWTON

E 2514/2514/93. No. 205

Sir M. Lampson to Viscount Halifax.—(Received August 26.)

No. 97.
(Telegraphic.) *Cairo, August 24, 1940.*

PRINCE MOHAMMED ALI states that Nuri, during his recent visit, raised with him the question of Egypt-Iraq alliance. Prince asked him what advantage Iraq had in an alliance with a country which was unable to defend itself.

2. Prince said Nuri's language at the lunch party given by His Highness to him and some Egyptian Ministers was very satisfactory. Nuri had stressed the importance of loyal co-operation with Egypt and with his British ally on the grounds of military expediency.

(Repeated to Jerusalem, No. 72, Bagdad, No. 55, Angora, No. 73, Jedda, No. 37, and Beirut, No. 86.)

[E 2751/48/93] No. 206

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received October 10.)

(No. 463. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Bagdad, August 31, 1940.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 319, Confidential, of the 26th June 1939, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith my annual report on the heads of foreign missions in Iraq for the year 1940.

I have, &c.
BASIL NEWTON

Enclosure in No. 206.

Report on Heads of Foreign Missions at Bagdad.

(Passages marked with an asterisk are reproduced from previous reports.)

Egypt: Awadh-al-Bahrawi Bey, Minister (July 18, 1940).

Came to Bagdad from the Egyptian Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He was formerly consul at Addis Ababa.

He is also minister to Saudi Arabia and created a precedent by presenting his letters of credence at Riyadh by special arrangement.

France. M. Jean Lescuyer, Minister (February 20, 1938).

*M. Lescuyer came from Angora, where for some years he had been counsellor. He is frank and friendly and always ready to exchange information and ideas. (Written in 1939.)

While he does not strike me as being exceptionally shrewd or able, he has proved himself a conscientious and helpful colleague since the outbreak of war until the collapse of France came as a sudden and severe blow to him. He has since recovered somewhat and is carrying on his duties as minister for the Vichy Government, though his personal sympathies remain with the Allied cause.

He has an attractive and capable wife, who was Swiss born. They have a son who fought at Dunkirk and a daughter who is nearly grown up.

Iran.

M. Noury Esfandiary was transferred on the 3rd July to Berlin, leaving the legation in the charge of the recently arrived counsellor, M. M. H. Nadjm. His successor has not yet been appointed.

Italy. M. Luigi Gabbrielli, Minister (December 5, 1936).

M. Gabbrielli is the first Italian representative who has been accredited to Iraq and with the rank of minister. He served for many years in Cairo and Beirut, is a bachelor and speaks French and some English.

In appearance and manner he is somewhat faded, and has been expecting to leave Bagdad, probably to go into retirement. His health is not good and his chief desire appears to be a quiet life, so he has been unhappy about the course of events. Some comment has been caused by his devotion to the small black daughter of his negro cook, whom he treats almost as an adopted child.

Japan. Mr. Taneki Kumabe, Minister (December 9, 1939).

He was born in 1893, studied law and entered the Japanese Foreign Service in 1919. He served in Switzerland, France, Mexico and Turkey prior to his [illegible] Foreign Office as head of the Third Section of the American Bureau in 1936.

Mr. Kumabe is unusually tall of stature and is said to have some foreign ancestry. He speaks fair French and English, but, like most of his race, is not a good conversationalist. He is friendly and evidently anxious to take an active part in local life. His arrival in Iraq was the signal for a concentrated Japanese trade drive, which resulted in the visit to Bagdad of a Japanese commercial delegation and the issue to three Iraqi merchants of invitations to visit Japan at the expense of the Japanese Government. He undertakes many duties which would normally devolve on a commercial secretary, and calls in person on any local merchants or minor Government officials who might assist in the promotion of Japanese trade with Iraq. He also tries to promote cultural exchanges.

Saudi Arabia.

Since the departure of Shaikh Hamza-al-Gauth in April 1940 the legation has been in the charge of the counsellor, Sayyid Asad-al-Faqih, who is a pleasant but colourless Syrian.

During the summer and up to the moment of writing this report the minister, for all practical purposes, has been Shaikh Yusuf Yasin, the private secretary of King Ibn Saud.

Turkey M Cavad Ustun, Minister (September 26 1939)

He succeeded M. Tahir Lutfi Tokay on the retirement of the latter He [illegible] couple, but both are congenitally nervous and it may be said without exaggera[illegible] whether real or imagined, has not been without its influence on his morale, and he has on several occasions shocked both Iraqis and his colleagues by giving expression to defeatist views. While he may not be fundamentally ill disposed. I have not found him a helpful colleague in times when robust courage and cheerful confidence are qualities to be desired in the representatives of countries having close relations with ourselves. Nevertheless, he and his wife are at all times very friendly

United States of America: Mr Paul Knabenshue, Minister Resident (November 7 1932)

It is his first diplomatic post He came from Beirut, where he had been consul general Before that he had served in Jerusalem and Cairo. He likes to [illegible] general at Belfast and it was there that he met and married his Irish wife

Mr Knabenshue seems friendly and ready to pass on any information that has reached him. He strikes me as a reasonably capable and a fair average type thoroughly well disposed to Great Britain and well-meaning, but of no great discretion or keenness of judgment

He has educated his children in England, and professes great faith in British institutions in general

Representatives accredited to Iraq but Resident Elsewhere

Belgium M Egbert Graeffe, Minister (April 27 1938)

*He is also Belgian Minister at Tehran, where he resides. (Written in 1939)

Czecho Slovakia Dr Vladimir Fric, Chargé d'Affaires (December 1, 1934)

*He is also in charge of the Czecho-Slovak Legation in Tehran, where he lives. (Written in 1939)

Denmark Dr M A E C Fenenack, Chargé d'Affaires (June 17, 1939)

*Resides in Tehran. He struck me as a good and typically friendly Dutch type. He is married. (Written in 1939)

Hungary M Zoltan de Mariassy, Minister (November 15, 1937)

*He is the first Hungarian Minister to be accredited to this post He is also accredited to Iran and Turkey and lives at Angora. He has not visited Bagdad since November 1937, and little is known of him here (Written in 1939)

Netherlands M C. Adriaanse, Chargé d'Affaires (May 9, 1936)

*He came from Jedda, where he is also accredited and where he lives. He stayed no more than a few days in Bagdad and has not yet paid another visit (Written in 1939)

Poland M Jan Karszo Siedlewski, Minister (March 27 1939)

*He is also Minister at Tehran and Kabul and resides in Tehran. (Written in 1939)

Sweden M Hugo von Heidenstam Minister (December 11, 1936).

He is accredited to Iran also, and spends most of his time at Tehran, making short [illegible] visits to Bagdad. His mother was Scottish and he speaks [illegible] English. A pleasant, talkative man, whose chief interest in Iraq seems to [illegible] secure public works contracts for Swedish firms. He is married

[E 2790 495 93] No. 207

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received October 17)

(No. 455. Confidential)

My Lord, *Bagdad, September 28, 1940.*

THE anniversary of the beginning of the Arab revolt against the Turks, which is known in Arabic as the "Id-al-Nadha," was celebrated in Iraq by a number of broadcast speeches and special articles in the press. These manifestations of political sentiment and pan-Arab aspirations seemed to evoke no great enthusiasm, and their importance should not be exaggerated. At the same time they [illegible] political quarters, and as such I think it is desirable that they should be recorded and duly pondered They are not encouraging

2. As the Arab "renaissance," which is what the Arabic word "Nadha" means, was initiated by His Majesty's Government in the last war and its success was almost solely due to British efforts and sacrifices, it might have been thought that some kind of acknowledgment of this vital assistance would have been expressed. Above all in Iraq, and above all at the present time such expression would seem appropriate and natural seeing that whatever disappointments other Arab countries may have suffered, Iraq at least has gained everything and lost nothing, that the independence won for this new country by British lives and money can only be ensured by the continuance of British support, and that every other country created as the result of the last war has for the time being at least lost its independence in the war now raging Unhappily, I have to record that not even the merest lip service was paid to the services of Iraq's British ally, on the contrary, the references made to Great Britain were allusive and hostile

3. Most of the broadcasts were inoffensive except for the latter part of an address by Colonel Kamal Shabib, the Officer Commanding the First Division of the Iraqi Army, who is one of the four army leaders considered to be of dominating political importance. I have the honour to transmit herewith a summary of this part of his address, and also extracts from the press (1) It will be seen that Colonel Shabib delivered over the radio much harsh comment on the alleged failure of the foreigners to keep their promises to the Arabs. In the press there was talk of the "clutches of the British lion," of the betrayal of the Arabs by their Western Allies, and of the hope of deliverance from the heel of imperialism Such were the expressions passed by the censor and used in the Arab country which owes its very existence to 92,000 British casualties, an immense increase in its prosperity to British co-operation, its retention of Mosul and the Kirkuk oil fields to British diplomacy, and the assurance of its future progress and continued independence to the British alliance It will be seen too, that even in the midst of another great war, which has consumed vast areas and populations and overwhelmed every country created since the last war with the single exception of Iraq, people are reckless and foolish enough to complain that "other nations have benefited while the Arab nation has not"

4. It is because this spirit of ungrateful and short sighted folly exists in high places (notably with the Prime Minister, Rashid Ali, and the Minister of Defence, Taha-al Hashimi) that I spoke to the Minister for Foreign Affairs with the emphasis indicated in the last [illegible] of paragraph 4 of my telegram No. 505 of the 31st August On many previous occasions I have spoken less bluntly but in a similar sense to the Prime Minister, to the present and the previous Ministers for Foreign Affairs, and to other political leaders, urging them to spread enlightenment by speeches through the press and to the education of the youth. The press attaché has also done all he can to diffuse knowledge of what Iraq owes to British help in the past, and of its vital need for British friendship in the future. Probably the chief politicians particularly of the old school, realise at heart the truth of what we say but both the Government and the press decline to act on such suggestions [illegible] and the Regent is perhaps the only leader who seems both to realise the real position and to wish to act accordingly so far as he can.

5. It is no doubt partly because Iraqi and Arab standards generally have [illegible] achieved a high level that we [illegible]

(1) Not printed

the Middle East. To judge by the forecast contained in Mr Houstoun Boswall's telegram No. 133 of the 10th April 1939 Iraqi behaviour towards Great Britain has been no worse—and, in fact, rather better—than might have been expected having regard to the course of the present war. In drawing attention therefore to the unhappy manifestations described above, I do not wish to imply any criticism of our past policy towards Iraq or to suggest that a different policy would have borne better fruit. Many critics have maintained that we abdicated our position too soon, and that it was unfair to give way to Iraqi clamours for independence until we had at least trained a new generation to distinguish its friends from its foes, and to exercise its responsibilities with a greater measure of political common sense and of understanding of the true interests of Iraq. I doubt myself whether we should thereby have gained a better stock of Iraqi goodwill or done more than postpone an eventual relapse to the low standards of political wisdom, moral courage and national tolerance which seem to be characteristic of this part of the world. At the same time I do think that it is very desirable that in taking decisions and shaping future policy His Majesty's Government should be under no illusions, and should realise that the generosity and in fact indulgence which they have [illegible] secured little recognition amongst the [illegible] generation and none at [illegible] judge by the studen[illegible]rs in the army, amongst the younger generation.

6. I am sending copies of this despatch, without the enclosures, to the Government of India, His Majesty's Ambassadors at Cairo and Angora, His Majesty's High Commissioner in Jerusalem, His Majesty's Minister at Jedda and His Majesty's Consul General in Beirut.

I have &c.
BASIL NEWTON

E 2816 495 93 — No. 208

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received October 22.)

(No. 632.)
(Telegraphic.) — *Baghdad, October 21, 1940*

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs indicated to me private [illegible] it would give much pleasure if Mr. Eden could visit Iraq. In promising to inform you accordingly, I warned Minister for Foreign Affairs that it might be very difficult for Minister of War to find time.

Although behaviour of Iraqi Government has not been such as to deserve compliment, I feel, now that Minister for Foreign Affairs has taken initiative such a visit could only have good effect and show both in Iraq and abroad that Iraq is in British camp.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 168 (please pass without delay to Minister for War).)

E 2816 495 93 — No. 209

Viscount Halifax to Sir B. Newton (Baghdad).

No. 545.
[illegible] — *Foreign Office, October 24, 1940*

[illegible] Suggested visit of Secretary of State for War [illegible] be possible [illegible] for [illegible] avoid [illegible] suggestion.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 1186.)

E 2837 2837 65 — No. 210

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received November 6.)

(No. 652.)
(Telegraphic.) — *Baghdad, November 4, 1940*

MY telegram No. 647.

I told the Minister for Foreign Affairs on 31st October that it seemed strange that the censor was suppressing all press criticism of the Axis's declaration of sympathy for the Arabs. I observed that in view of Germany's broken pledges and of Italy's record in Libya, the declaration was an insult to the intelligence of the Arabs.

2. Nuri Pasha did not deny that criticism had been suppressed, but pointed out that the censor was controlled by the Prime Minister as Acting Minister of the Interior and not by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He denied that [illegible] Minister of Defence also had had a hand in the direction of press censorship.

3. He added that, though he had himself given up reading newspapers, [illegible] seemed that some criticism of the "declaration" was permitted, as he had heard quotations from Iraqi newspapers read out in B.B.C.'s Arabic programme. I do not know, however, to what he was referring and he gave no particulars. Press attaché will now make further attempt to inquire criticism.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 173, and Jerusalem, No. 33, Saving.)

E 2910 2910 93 — No. 211

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received November 9.)

(No. 662.)
(Telegraphic.) — *Baghdad, November 7, 1940*

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs informed me this morning that Soviet Ambassador at Angora had recently intimated to the Iraqi Minister that Russia would welcome the establishment of diplomatic relations with [illegible] for Foreign Affairs related that Russian delegate in 1933 [illegible] at Sov[illegible] 1933 [illegible]

2. Minister for Foreign Affairs said that Government did not wish to act on the matter without consulting His Majesty's Government and need not reply to the informal enquiry made at Angora, but I received the impression that he was now disposed to favour the exchange of diplomatic missions with the Soviet Government.

3. Subject to wider considerations, I see from the local viewpoint no advantages and many potential disadvantages. In the present state of Anglo-Soviet relations the presence of Soviet mission in Baghdad would give rise to the risk of hostile political intrigues, and I foresee additional danger of spread of communistic propaganda among the masses in Iraq, who are ill equipped to resist its insidious appeal.

4. It does not seem that the presence of Soviet mission would bring to Iraq any advantages to compensate for these risks and, once established, it is not likely to be withdrawn. From our point of view, I am inclined to think that the fewer diplomatic missions in Iraq and perhaps other Arabic countries or in Egypt the better, and we do not want to accelerate revival of Russian ambitions in the Persian Gulf and group undecypherable.

(Repeated to Moscow, No. 2, Cairo, No. 180 (copy to Middle East and pass to Jedda, No. 46), Angora, No. 80, and Government of India, No. 17, Saving.)

E 2670 G] No. 212

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received November 9.)

(No. 664. Secret.)
(Telegraphic.) (*Extract.*) *Baghdad, November 8, 1940.*

PRESENT position is as follows:—

Notification was published in press on 31st October stating (1) that telegraphic communication with Germany and Italy had been suspended at outbreak of war because telegrams to these countries under then existing procedure were transmitted by British companies, but (2) that service would now be resumed as a result of arrangements for transmission via Iran.

2. Telegraphic correspondence can, therefore, now take place without restriction between Iraq, Germany, Italy, and I understand that resumption of this service was due to representations made by Italian Minister.

3. Postal communications to both countries (direct via Turkey) has never [illegible] since the war, but it has revealed information in censorship [illegible] undecipherable) and interruption of service might involve [illegible] of accommodation addresses in neutral countries.

4. Prior to new telegraphic facilities (see paragraph 1) and despite Minister for Foreign Affairs assurances in my telegram No. 248, telegrams from Italian Legation have been accepted for transmission to neutral countries, whence they could easily be readdressed to Italy. Even in absence of this indirect channel Italian Legation could probably have induced Japanese or Iranian Legation to accept their cypher correspondence for onward transmission.

* * * * * *

6. It might be difficult to contend that Italian Legation should be denied facilities for confidential communication so long as Legation is maintained with full diplomatic rights, and although I could with more reason express my resentment at Iraqi Government, as an ally, complying with Italian Minister's request for extending full telegraphic facilities to the general public, I doubt if representations of any kind would serve useful purpose in the circumstances explained above.

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E 2913 203 93] No. 213

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received November 12.)

(No. 489 E.)
My Lord, *Baghdad, October 19, 1940.*

IN my despatch No. 271 E. of the 10th June, 1940, I reviewed the financial position of the Iraqi Government, which seemed reasonably satisfactory at that time, provided that the oil exports were maintained, Iraq was not brought into direct contact with the war and non-essential expenditure was curtailed.

2. The outlook for Iraqi finances has, however, deteriorated during the past three months, as will have been noted from the commercial secretary's recent monthly economic reports on Iraq. The change may be attributed mainly to the following factors:—

(1) The reduction of oil shipments after the capitulation of France to 20 per cent. of the normal volume.
(2) A shrinkage in revenues likely to result from the poor harvest and a possible decline in the volume of imports.
(3) The assumption by the Iraqi Government of substantial additional financial liabilities not provided for in the budget.
(4) The rise in expenditure, primarily for defence purposes, without due regard to the country's financial resources.
(5) The weak character of the present Minister of Finance.

3. As regards extraordinary revenue, of the sum of about I.D. 1,470,000 in respect of oil royalties, which would be due from the Iraq Petroleum Company in a year of normal shipments, approximately half had accrued and been received

by the end of June, since when oil shipments have been cut down by 80 per cent. [illegible] to the [illegible] interruptions owing to enemy bombing, the Iraqi Government will probably receive less than I.D. 130,000 during the second half [illegible] at I.D. 730,000, the loss in revenue for capital works account thus [illegible] approximately I.D. 600,000. The usual rents of the Basra Petroleum Company and the British Oil Development Company will still be payable and will amount to about I.D. 740,000. (The oil revenue figures quoted in this paragraph represent the net sums retainable by the Iraqi Government after deducting the percentage of the royalties payable to the Turkish Government.)

4. During the first few months of the current financial year ordinary revenues were well maintained, customs receipts, which provide nearly 40 per cent. of the total being bolstered up by duties realised [illegible] during the period of heavy importation about six months previously, but not cleared at that time. As shipments from Japan have been sharply curtailed [illegible] past three months and arrivals of goods from Europe have slackened [illegible] of goods entering customs warehouses is reported [illegible] that going out. Unless imports, especially from [illegible] customs receipts may occur towards the end of [illegible] I.D. 200,000, for which no provision has [illegible] only part of this sum is likely to be recovered from [illegible]

6. It appears that the Government are about to incur a [illegible] financial liability. The Director-General of Economics [illegible] commercial secretary that the Date Board ma[illegible] Zahdi date crop amounting to 110,000 to 120,000 [illegible] shipping season is in full swing it is anticipated that a [illegible] will be carried over to next season. The Date Board wou[illegible] sales the cash expenditure on the remaining 60,000 tons [illegible] be left on the Date Board's hands might involve an outla[illegible] I.D. 200,000. The board could, I understand, contribute to this sum [illegible] I.D. 50,000 from its working capital. This would leave nearly I.D. [illegible] by the Government, unless the board found other means [illegible]

7. Owing to the difficulty of obtaining from the United Kingdom or F[illegible] the Ministry of Defence are turning to non-sterling countries, particularly the United States, for military supplies and are paying cash for any they can secure. They have spent, or propose to spend, about I.D. 600,000 in the United States of America alone during the current financial year. The Ministry of Defence are also turning to Japan and have decided to purchase from that country six anti-aircraft equipments to a value of about I.D. 250,000 (see my telegram No. Arfar 69–S). As it is doubtful whether the Mi[illegible] and the Minister of Finance have yet realised that [illegible] being placed on the country's finance[illegible]

not been taken to reduce the Ministry of Defence's expenditure in other directions sufficiently to provide funds to cover all, or even most of these purchases, in fact comparatively large sums are still being spent locally on barracks, equipment, &c in connexion with the army expansion. A senior Ministry of Finance official has admitted to the commercial secretary that his Ministry are unaware of the actual or even contemplated financial commitments of the Ministry of Defence. The other important spending Ministries, Education and Social Affairs, are also continuing to expand, and are not expected to effect any appreciable economies in their current budgets. It is anticipated that both will ask for larger appropria[illegible] when they submit their budgets for 1941 42. It would be prudent to restrict rather than increase expenditure on educational and social services under present [illegible] of threatened financial stringency, the more so as higher educational [illegible] for the products of such education. Meanwhile, no additional taxation seems to have been seriously contemplated so far, but it is feared that customs duties, being the chief source of ordinary revenue, may be again increased. The new [illegible] Profits Tax may also be increased. It is problematical, however, whether additional taxation can bridge the present widening gap between income and expenditure.

8. I reported in my despatch under reference that of the anticipated receipts for capital works amounting to about I D 3,250,000, I D 750,000 was being set aside as a reserve against the accumulated deficit of nearly I D 500,000 from the year 1939 40, and the authorised budgetary deficit of I D 240,000 for 1940 41. Shrinkage in revenues, both ordinary and extraordinary, is, however, likely to absorb more than the reserve mentioned. For this reason alone, therefore, the accumulated deficit will probably reach at least I D 750,000. It will be further increased by the unforeseen additional cash expenditure mentioned above which may reach a total of nearly I D 1,200,000 as a maximum. Means might be devised of meeting some of this expenditure, but there are grounds for assuming that possibly one half, say I D 600,000, might remain uncovered. On this basis the total shortage at the end of the current financial year might reach nearly I D 1,400,000. This rough figure is higher than a tentative estimate recently [illegible] deficit might rise by the 31st March next to the record figure of I D 1,250,000, the previous peak being I D 900,000 in 1938 39. Having funds on deposit from various departments, especially the Port of Basra, amounting to from I D 500,000 to I D 600,000, the Iraqi Government can carry a deficit up to the latter amount without much embarrassment, but a deficit of the magnitude of I D 1,250,000 seems bound to involve serious financial difficulties, from which the Government would appear unable to extricate themselves without outside aid either from the local British banks or from His Majesty's Government. The banks would be most reluctant under existing conditions, to make any substantial advances to the Government or to accept Treasury Bills up to an amount which would materially help the Government to tide over what threatens to be a period of acute financial stringency. The Iraqi Government may, therefore, be forced to make an appeal to His Majesty's Government.

9. The financial crisis, which seems likely to develop by the end of 1940 is attributable in no small measure to the weakness of the present Minister of Finance, Sayyid Naji al Suwaidi. He seems reluctant to face the facts of the [illegible] of adopting a policy of retrenchment. The senior officials of the Ministry of Finance have seen the rocks ahead uncovered since the collapse of France, and have informed the Minister of their apprehensions, but as yet to no avail. Most of them hanker after a man of stronger personality and wider financial experience such as Sayyid Ibrahim Kemal. One went so far as to say to the commercial [illegible] the 1941 42 budget, the estimates for which are now being prepared.

10. As the Iraqi Government may shortly find themselves [illegible] straits, it seems desirable to consider whether the opportunity should not be seized to press for the appointment of a financial adviser. It will be recollected that when I last raised the question with both the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Finance, no enthusiasm was shown (see my letter of the 1st [illegible] the value of expert advice in important financial matters, he thought that this

could best be obtained by engaging a suitable specialist temporarily when required. The need for a financial adviser is now all the more essential to advise on exchange matters as well as on difficulties connected with defence expenditure and balancing the budget. Mr Swan, the Inspector General of the Iraqi Customs [illegible] reporting separately on his qualifications and on other questions relating to the financial advisership.

11. I am sending a copy of this despatch to the Department of Overseas Trade.

I have, &c
BASIL NEWTON

E 2905 448 93. No. 214

Viscount Halifax to Sir B Newton (Bagdad)

(No. 580)
(Telegraphic) *Foreign Office, November 14 1940*

YOUR telegrams Nos. 656 and 663 [of 6th and 7th November] Political situation in Iraq.

His Majesty's Government consider it essential, in view of military situation in Middle East, to take vigorous steps as and when practicable, with a view to remedy the present most unsatisfactory position in Iraq, which otherwise seems bound to grow steadily worse. Action open to us is, however, limited by the fact that British troops are still not available to garrison the country, and that we are still unable to supply Iraqis with the anti aircraft guns, &c, which they consider necessary for their defence.

2. Clearly, the first step must be to secure the removal of Rashid Ali, who has been intriguing with the Axis Powers and has been openly adopting a policy which is totally inconsistent with the Anglo Iraqi Alliance. I feel strongly that [illegible] Government altogether. There can be no improvement in the [illegible]

3. The situation described in your telegrams under reply seems to [illegible] the best possible opportunity for achieving this object and securing the advent to power of a more friendly and loyal Prime Minister. I do not wish to suggest the names of any Iraqi politicians whose appointment would be especially [illegible] Cabinet should be willing and able to work in closer harmony with this country and to act always in accordance with the spirit as well as the letter of the alliance. You should speak to the Regent in this sense, making it clear that we should not regard a Cabinet which included Rashid Ali as fulfilling this condition.

4. We shall, of course, require from the Iraqis considerably more than a change of Government if financial and economic assistance is to be accorded to them in future. I realise, however, that if our full requirements were put forward at this stage, it might not be practicable for the Regent to constitute a Government which would be willing to implement them. In particular, it will evidently need careful preparation if the Iraqi Government are to be induced to take really effective action to stop the Mufti's intrigues. At this stage, therefore, I think that we must be content with the formation of a reasonably friendly Government without our having to make any specific promises of assistance. Once a more friendly Government is in power I hope it may not be long before, in return for financial and economic assistance we shall be able to secure our other important desiderata. On this last point I should like you to put it about indirectly that Iraqis, if they continue their present course of behaviour cannot expect continuance of present economic and trade facilities which they owe to us. In fact he that is not for us is against us and will be treated accordingly.

E 2676 G] No. 215

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax. (*Received November 18.*)

(No. 601.)
[illegible] *Bagdad, November 16, 1940*

MY telegram No. 664.

Subject to your comments on my telegram under reference, I think it would be desirable to express officially to the Minister for Foreign Affairs the surprise [illegible] the telegraph service with Italy and Germany should have been made without previous consultation with us, referring him to paragraphs 2 and 3 of article 1 of the Treaty of Alliance. I need, however, not necessarily ask the Iraqi Government to cancel the present arrangements.

[illegible] in conversation with the M[illegible]

E 2505/448/93 No. 216

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax. (*Received November 20.*)

(No. 696. Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, November 19, 1940*

[illegible] telegram No. 580.

[illegible] of Minister for Foreign Affairs. There is no doubt of desire of His Royal Highness and of General Nuri Pasha to act accordingly, but their plans for doing so appear to be still fluid.

General Nuri Pasha had called on the previous day when I had taken the opportunity to inform him of the tenor of my instructions. On that occasion he said he thought it might be prudent to reconstruct the Government by ste[illegible] Defence and perhaps [illegible] Foreign Affairs. [illegible] might become Minister of Finance. If the present Prime Minister were left in [illegible] be dealt with later more easily if Madfai were Minister of the Interior and he himself Minister of Defence.

3. During my audience to-day no such definite plan was mentioned, but the R[illegible] complaints—that Salahuddin is a bad pro-German influence and they desire to be prepared for his resistance to the elimination of the political influence of Rashid Ali and himself. They spoke of Taha as being weak in his political and personal decisions and did not suggest who eventually new Prime Minister might be.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 186.)

E 2676 G] No. 217

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(*Received November 21.*)

(No. 697.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, November 20, 1940*

MY telegram No. 691.

Story reached me recently that Naji Shaukat returned from Istanbul with variety of Axis desiderata, including (*a*) resumption of direct telegraphic communication, (*b*) legislation against Jews in Iraq, (*c*) resumption of diplomatic re[illegible]

[illegible] yesterday I mentioned story to Regent and Minister for Foreign [illegible]

Cabinet as a whole had been consulted in regard to resumption of telegraphic communication, and that no suggestions under (*b*) and (*c*) had been submitted to the Cabinet. He thought [illegible] and this I have heard from another good source—that Colonel Sala-ud Din might have put about the suggestion that diplomatic relations should be resumed with Germany.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 187.)

E 2676 G] No. 218

Viscount Halifax to Sir B. Newton (Bagdad).

(No. 591.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, November 22, 1940*

YOUR telegrams Nos. 664 and 691 [of 8th and 16th November respectively: Telegraphic facilities between Iraq and Germany and Italy].

I agree that so long as diplomatic relations are maintained between Iraq and Italy it would be difficult for Iraqi Government to deny telegraphic facilities to Italian Legation. That is [illegible] gone out of their way to arrange facilities enabling general public to telegraph to Italy, still less to Germany.

2. Since we know this to be part of a deliberate campaign on the part of the Iraqi Government to ingratiate themselves with Axis Powers, I cannot pass the matter over in silence. At the same time I am doubtful whether question is specifically covered by any provisions in Anglo-Iraqi Treaty. Nor do I wish to appear to be asking Iraqi Government for favours.

3. Unless you see serious objection, you should, as proposed, express [illegible] ally to Minister for Foreign Affairs [illegible] which His Majesty's Government have learned of this step, and also of action taken by Iraqi Government to suppress criticism of recent German declaration. You may add that His Majesty's Government do not propose at present to press the Iraqi Government to alter these decisions. They wish, however, to make it clear that the Iraqi Government must in the future take the greatest care in such matters where their action must give the impression of being aimed against the interests of the Anglo-Iraqi Alliance, and may therefore have very serious consequences indeed for Iraq.

4. You might also request the Minister for Foreign Affairs to inform his colleagues of this communication.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 1380.)

E 2676 G] No. 219

Viscount Halifax to Sir B. Newton (Bagdad).

(No. 593.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, November 22, 1940*

MY telegram No. 591 [of 22nd November: Telegraph facilities between Iraq and Germany].

After you have taken action on my telegram under reference I suggest that it would be well for you to tell the Regent, and possibly General Nuri also, that you have heard that the Italians are likely to attempt to persuade Iraqi Government to restore diplomatic relations with Germany. You might say that you have no doubt that such an attempt would at once be rejected by the Iraqi Government in the most emphatic terms. We should [illegible] Iraqi Government to point out to the Italians that such action on their part would be totally inconsistent with the spirit of the Anglo-Iraqi Alliance, which the Iraqi Government are determined to implement.

2. You might add that, should any suggestion as regards the desirability of restoring relations with Germany be ventilated publicly in the Iraqi press or in other Iraqi quarters, it will be up to the Iraqi Government at once to make a public statement declaring that the resumption of diplomatic relations with Germany would be contrary to the spirit of the Anglo-Iraqi Alliance, and is therefore out of the question in present circumstances.

3. If your discussions lead you to suspect any serious danger of relations with Germany being renewed, you should indicate plainly, without entering into [illegible] revision of policy of His Majesty's Government, with most serious results to Iraq.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 1381.)

E 2905/448/93] No. 220

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received November 26.)

(No. 709.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, November 25, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 600.

After explaining the nature of my report to you on my last audience (my telegram No. 699), I told the Regent and Nuri Pasha at my audience to-day of your reaction as shown in your telegram which had just reached me. I mentioned also paragraph 4. Regent assured me that the action intended to secure early exposure of the Prime Minister would be taken without delay.

2. Nuri Pasha had previously told me that the Regent had reason for taking the view that in some matter which was not specified the Prime Minister had acted in a high handed and unconstitutional manner. Both he and the Regent were inclined to think it better to join the issue with the Prime Minister on this or some other internal ground rather than on that of dissatisfaction of His Majesty's Government, with his foreign policy. I replied that this was a matter for them to judge. I personally found it difficult to believe that any responsible and patriotic Iraqi could wish to support a Prime Minister who tried to curry favour with Governments with such records and ambitions as those of Germany and Italy and who was estranging the one Government which had been proved by the history of Iraq to be its true friend and whose support was obviously vital for Iraq.

3. I also suggested to the Regent that he should make sure that no important decisions were taken behind his back recalling the resumption of telegraphic communications with Germany and Italy and the story in my telegram No. 697.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 192.)

E 3012/G] No. 221

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received November 28.)

(No. 714.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, November 26, 1940.*

MY telegram No. 709.

After my audience with Nuri Pasha, Regent sent first for Minister of Communications, Minister of Defence and then for Prime Minister, all of whom denied any knowledge of the resumption of telegraphic communications with Germany and Italy. Despite the preference which he had expressed for using some internal grounds for getting rid of the Prime Minister, the Regent deferred any decisive step until the Prime Minister had had opportunity of seeing me, which he did at the embassy this morning.

2. At considerable length the Prime Minister explained to me that his policy was one of sincere collaboration with His Majesty's Government, repeated above denial, saying that he would be prepared, after investigation, to revoke Post Office decision, and assured me that there was no question of a resumption of diplomatic relations with Germany, nor any truth in the story associated with Naji Shaukat.

3. I dealt with these three matters in reverse order. I told him of communication which I had made to the Regent in accordance with your telegram No. 593 and as there seemed to be some confusion in his mind, made it clear that this communication was quite separate from the story of the proposals said to have been quoted by Naji Shaukat from Istanbul. I explained that I had felt it would be unwise to disregard this story as being merely malicious, seeing that it had reached me from three different sources, that first proposal had, in fact been realised, and that, as a result of information obtained in London, I had

subsequently been instructed to convey an official warning in regard to the third proposal.

4. In reply to his denial of any knowledge of resumption of telegra[illegible] me two or three days before the announcement and that I had then hoped it would prove to be merely a malicious story. A full announcement had, however, appeared in the press 31st October and been the subject of much comment. Instructions had also been sent from Baghdad to the Post Office which is under Iraqi administration, in Kuwait to accept telegrams for Germany and Italy. Moreover, it was as long after announcement as 25th November that he denied knowledge of such an important step. This doubt as to facts could not be explained to the satisfaction of His Majesty's Government.

5. Finally, I observed that I had only discussed the above two m[illegible] he himself had dwelt on them. It was, however, too late to go [illegible] specific cases and details. When he had assumed office he had told me his policy would be one of sincere and whole hearted collaboration with His Majesty's Government. He had now just renewed these assurances. Unhappily, in practice actions for which he was responsible, not once nor twice, but a long continued series of actions, had been at variance with those assurances and he had now lost the confidence of His Majesty's Government in his ability to collaborate with them.

He then showed that assurances will lack meaning as well as sa[illegible]

6. Subsequently, I informed the Regent and Nuri Pasha of wha[illegible] for Foreign Affairs of a statement he had made to me last night that, if Prime [illegible]

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 193.)

E 3010/448/93] No. 222

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received November 28.)

(No. 716.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, November 27, 1940.*

MY telegram No. 714.

Nuri Pasha told me early this morning that the Prime Minister had informed [illegible] his audience with the Regent on 25th November.

2. Naji Shaukat and Naji Suwaidi had spoken resentfully of Brit[illegible] to collaborate with His Majesty's Government in the fulfilment of the treaty and that action should be taken to meet my representations accordingly. Prime Minister had apparently not even hinted at resignation.

3. Nuri Pasha said that Taha felt strongly that a crisis was undesirable at present and at Taha's urgent request, he had agreed to do what he could to seek settlement with me which would enable the Government to remain in office.

4. I replied that it was now too late to discuss such a proposal. The [illegible] that whatever his intentions might be, Prime Minister was not able to [illegible]

5. The first essential step, therefore, to the restoration of confid[illegible]

6. Nuri Pasha told me that he had expected this reply and said that he [illegible] had promised that not even an acting successor would be appointed, and he hoped that Taha would resign in a few days and that the Government would then collapse.

7. Situation is typical of Iraqi shilly shallying and some days are likely to pass before it is cleared up.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 195.)

E 3012 G] No. 223

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received November 29.)

(No. 715.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, November 27, 1940*

MY telegram No. 714.

I thought that it would be unprofitable to enumerate to the Prime Minister acts which had alienated the confidence of His Majesty's Government, but to meet the possibility of attempt by him to convince Regent or others that the attitude of His Majesty's Government was not justified, I gave the Regent outline of some of our chief grounds for complaint.

Firstly, I said that, though I had no instructions to ask Iraqi Government to break off diplomatic relations with Italy just now, their refusal to take this step (for which Prime Minister was mainly responsible) at the time when it would have been easy to take and when I had pressed for it had caused very bad impression in London.

Secondly, I referred to frequent press declarations that policy of Prime Minister's Cabinet was one of complete neutrality and to Prime Minister's failure [illegible] his name, or to refute them by a clear announcement of his intention to co-operate fully with His Majesty's Government.

Thirdly, Prime Minister had persistently decided [*sic*] to accede to my [illegible] true interest of Iraq in close collaboration with His Majesty's Government.

Fourthly, I referred to two specific points dealt with in my aide mémoire.

Finally, I said that, whether or not there was any truth in the current stories about the Prime Minister's intrigues with the Italian Minister and the Axis Powers, his policy, as shown above, had encouraged such stories and he had done nothing convincing to deny or counteract them.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 104.)

E 3020/448/93 No. 224

Viscount Halifax to Sir B. Newton (Bagdad).

(No. 200.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, November 29, 1940*

THE Iraqi Chargé d'Affaires came to see me this morning at his own request [illegible] to speak about the representations which you had recently made to the Iraqi Government [illegible] that this was merely routine correspondence which had always been maintained since the beginning of the war. As regards the allegation that the Iraqi Government had prohibited criticism in Iraqi newspapers of the German Government's recent declaration about their Arab policy, the Minister for Foreign Affairs had replied that there was no foundation at all for this. Your Excellency had stated, further, that it was understood that the Iraqi Government were thinking of reopening diplomatic relations with Germany either through the [illegible] the German Government in this respect, but for themselves they were as always most anxious to continue to maintain the alliance with Great Britain and to apply the treaty in the letter and in the spirit. As regards the suggestion which you had made that the Iraqi Government intended to enact legislation against the Jews, the Minister for Foreign Affairs had replied that such legislation was impossible since it would be contrary to the constitution of Iraq.

3. None the less, Sayid Ata Amin continued, your Excellency had stated that His Majesty's Government did not trust the Iraqi Prime Minister and that [illegible] relations with Great Britain. Nuri Pasha wished me to know that the Iraqi Government were astonished at this statement on the part of your Excellency

which seemed to them to be contrary to the spirit of the treaty and to standards of international courtesy, and to infringe the dignity and independence of Iraq. He could not believe that such a statement could have been made on instructions from His Majesty's Government, particularly at a moment when there was really no dispute between the two countries with regard to the application of the Treaty of Alliance.

4. I told the Chargé d'Affaires that I was very much obliged for the message which he had given me. I hoped, however, that he would report to Nuri Pasha that the action which your Excellency had taken had been on my direct instructions. The position was that His Majesty's Government attached [illegible] maintenance of good relations between our two countries. It was clearly in the interests of both of us that our relations should be as close and intimate and harmonious as possible. For that very reason I had felt justified in instructing you to speak so frankly. I could not conceal from the Iraqi Government that we had not received from the Iraqi Prime Minister the degree of co-operation which we considered ourselves entitled to under the treaty, and it had seemed necessary to us, if we were to prevent matters going from bad to worse, to the disadvantage of both of our countries, for your Excellency to speak quite frankly to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

5. Turning to the various points in Nuri Pasha's reply, I said that I took note of what he said as regards the question of postal correspondence, and that, if I had any further communication to make on this subject, I would ask your Excellency to convey it to the Iraqi Government. I was bound to have regard to Nuri Pasha's statement that the allegation about the suppression of criticism of the German declaration had no foundation. At the same time I had certainly been [illegible] that such criticism had, in fact, been restrained by the Iraqi authorities. On that point, however, I had no more to say for the moment in view of Nuri Pasha's assurance. As regards the general question, as the Iraqi Government knew, we had no desire to interfere in their internal affairs nor to do anything inconsistent with the dignity of the Iraqi State and its position in the world. At the same time, as I said, we were concerned to see that our relations were as harmonious as possible, and I certainly did not think that the Iraqi Prime Minister's conduct of affairs had been conducive to the maintenance of our relations. In the circumstances the only frank and honest course had been for me to send your Excellency the instructions which you had carried out.

6. The Chargé d'Affaires said that he wished to impress upon me that Nuri Pasha considered it very serious indeed for such a request as this to be made at such a time and [illegible] be bound to have serious repercussions [illegible] the interests either of that country or of Great Britain.

7. I asked him to believe that [illegible] I had not been convinced that the [illegible] Nuri Pasha [illegible] Government would [illegible] the most friendly relations [illegible]

8. Sayid Ata Amin [illegible] he must inform his Government that [illegible] for the removal of the Iraqi Prime Minister still stood. I replied that I had already said that your Excellency had spoken on this matter with my full authority. I regarded your conversation with Nuri Pasha, just as I regarded our present conversation, as a frank talk between friends. The only people who could benefit from our failure to agree would be third parties, who did not wish well to either of us. I would certainly give full consideration to the message from the Minister for Foreign Affairs, but I hoped that the Chargé d'Affaires would make it quite plain in the report to his Government that your Excellency was speaking with the full authority of His Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
HALIFAX

E 3010 448 93] No. 225

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received December 1.)

(No. 727.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, November 30, 1940.*

MY telegram No. 7[illegible]

No doubt with the intention that his observations should be passed on to me, the Prime Minister assured Mr. Edmunds this morning that his wish was to work [illegible] underlying threat that persistence by His Majesty's Government in attempts to dislodge him would cause serious resentment among the public. There are many reports that Rashid Ali and Naji Shawkat have declared that they will stick to office whatever happens.

2. Mr. Edmunds later saw Nuri Pasha, who told him that he had sent in his resignation presumably on 27th November and sent copies to the Regent and to all of the members of the Cabinet. At the request of the Cabinet, Minister for Foreign Affairs had sent telegram on 27th November to Iraqi [illegible] with instructions described in my immediately following tel[illegible] added that, if the reply from London showed that Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs confirmed his action, Umar Nadhmi and Taha would probably resign.

3. Latter may, of course, be wishful thinking, but Nuri Pasha has no doubt been discussing with them formation of new Government. Many observers believe that Jamil Madfai is best able to form new Government. Difficulties in his way, however, are his reluctance to include Nuri Pasha and opposition of the military clique.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 197.)

E 3010 448 93] No. 226

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received December 1.)

(No. 7[illegible])
(Tele[illegible]) *Bagdad, November [illegible]*

MY [illegible] present[illegible]

Prime Minister sent Mr. Edmunds to me this morning with text of telegram despatched to Iraqi Legation in London on 27th November.

2. Its description of the action which I have taken (details of which I have already reported) is fairly accurate in outline, though not in detail. Telegram still confuses my formal communications to Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regent with the story about proposals brought back by Naji Shawkat from Turkey (see my telegram No. 714, paragraph 3). Moreover, though I have certainly made it clear that the Prime Minister has lost the confidence of His Majesty's Government, I did not, as is alleged, draw the logical conclusion by offering to Iraqi Government two alternatives cited in Iraqi telegram of keeping either the Prime Minister or its good relations with Great Britain.

3. Iraqi Chargé d'Affaires is instructed in this telegram to express surprise at communication which I have made and to enquire whether Secretary of State confirms that I acted in accordance with instructions. At the same time he is to point out that my action is regarded by Iraqi Government as not being in accord with mutual interests of the two Governments in these critical times.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 198.)

E 3910 2910 93] No. 227

Viscount Halifax to Sir B. Newton (Bagdad).

(No. 613.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, December 1, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 662 and Moscow telegram No. 979 [of 7th and 11th November: Iraqi-Soviet relations].

I see no advantage to Iraqi Government or to ourselves in establishment of diplomatic relations between Iraq and the Soviet Union. Neither country has at

present any interests in the other. On the other hand I agree with your view th[illegible] Mission at Bagdad might be a step in a renewed Russian drive to the Persian Gulf, and it would certainly be widely regarded as such. Mission's general policy would no doubt be to make trouble for us and undermine our position in the Middle East, where the Russians, with German backing, may at any moment become extremely active. It must also be remembered that Soviet frontier [illegible] sufficiently near to Iraq to make penetration of all kinds an unpleasant possibility.

2. From the point of view of Anglo-Soviet relations, I do not think that general policy of Soviet Government or their attitude towards British diplomatic and consular representation in the Soviet Union and Central Asia would justify a decision to encourage the establishment of closer relations between Iraq and the Soviet Union in spite of the serious disadvantages of the proposal from every other point of view.

3. You should therefore strongly discourage proposal.

R[illegible]ed to Moscow, No. 830, Cairo, No. 1422, Angora, No. 1344, and [illegible] No. 77[illegible].

E 3010 448 93] No. 228

Viscount Halifax to Sir B. Newton (Bagdad).

(No. 622.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, December 3, 1940.*

CORRESPONDENCE ending with your telegram No. 728 [of 30th November].

I approve your language and, as you will have seen from my telegr[illegible] No. 613 [of 30th November], I have made it quite clear to Iraqi Chargé d'Aff[illegible] you have throughout been acting on instructions from me.

2. I did not think it worth while to take up with him inaccuracies and [illegible]sistencies on points of detail in his communication.

3. Line to be taken in reply to charge of interference in Iraqi internal affairs seems to be as follows. We do not admit such interference. What we have done is frankly to explain to Iraqi Government our concern lest relations between the two countries should deteriorate further, and equally frankly to make [illegible] assurances. Practical conclusion to be drawn from this action on our pa[illegible] [illegible]

(Addressed to Bagdad, No. 622, repeated to Cairo, No. 1441.)

E 3020 448 93] No. 229

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received December 3.)

(No. 734.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, December 2, 1940.*

MY telegram No. 728.

Text of reply received 1st December from [illegible] representative] is given [illegible]

2. It was considered by the Prime Minister, Minister for F[illegible] Affairs, M[illegible] last sentence of paragraph 1 that the door was still open to appeasement between His Majesty's Government and existing Iraqi Government.

3. In subsequent talk with the adviser to the Ministry of Interior, who also acts on occasion as adviser to Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Nuri Pasha indicated—

(1) That Rashid Ali had given it out that he had won over Jamil Madfai to join him in resisting attempt by His Majesty's Government to turn out an Iraqi Prime Minister, and

(2) That much wind has been taken out of the sails of Naji Shawkat and other defeatist or pro-German elements in Iraq by the Greek successes, by the failure of German diplomacy in the Balkans and by the denial by the Russian Ambassador (to Iraqi Minister at Angora) of the report that Russia and Germany had agreed to divide Iran and Iraq between them, and of other stories attributed by Russian Ambassador [illegible] that Russia was helping Germany to [illegible]

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 220.)

E 3020/448/93 [illegible]

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax. (*Received December 3.*)

(No. 735.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, December 2, 1940.*

FOLLOWING is text referred to in my immediately preceding telegram:—

"I saw Lord Halifax to-day, Friday, and explained to him the contents of your telegram in its various aspects. He replied that the object of the British Government was friendship and good relations and non-interference in the internal affairs of Iraq, but they had recently observed in Iraq matters inconsistent with the spirit of the Treaty of Alliance, and indeed with its letter also, and therefore the ambassador had been instructed to make the statement he had made. I explained to him the gravity of such a statement and how it would harm the interests of both parties and only benefit the third party. Similarly, I mentioned to him the unfortunate impression to which it would give rise in Iraq and Arab circles in these critical days, in addition to its effect on racial pride and independence and to its inconsistency with the treaty. He pondered a little and said: 'I appreciate the gravity of the question, the fact that it does not affect only the two countries and that perhaps the enemy will profit from it, but they were obliged so to act in view of the state of affairs they had recently observed, a state of which the least that could be said was that it was far removed from the co-operation expected between Allied States.' I said to him: 'Since you appreciate the gravity of the matter and agree with our view of the kind of consequences to which it is likely to lead, do you agree that I should inform the Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs that, having heard my statement, you will send new instruction to Bagdad?' He replied: 'I should write to Bagdad stating that, although he fully appreciated the explanation of the views of the Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs which had been communicated through me, he desired to consider the matter before replying to my question.'

"2. My personal observations are that the British Government are annoyed with the Prime Minister, but at the same time desire, if possible, to avoid an open quarrel with the Iraqi G[illegible]"

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 221.)

E 3020/448/93] No. 231

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax. (*Received December 6.*)

(No. 742.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, December 4, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 622.

I am grateful for your Lordship's support.

2. Regent, who is young and inexperienced, seems, as Nuri Pasha has himself observed to me, to have been rather weak in his interviews with Rashid Ali. By consenting to the Prime Minister's proposal to see me with the object [illegible] responsibility for the plain speaking in my telegram No. 714. I felt such [illegible] was [illegible] instructions and that in the circumstances I should let the Regent down if I refrained from repeating to Rashid direct the sense of

what I had already said to His Royal Highness. I hope that my statement may have helped to overcome hesitations to which Iraqis are so prone, and I believe it has done good by making it clear to a wider circle that the patience of His Majesty's Government was becoming exhausted.

3. Since then Rashid has been making conciliatory overtures and trying to put the blame for the attitude of the press on to Taha. At the same time, he has been conveying threat that, if his overtures are not accepted, he will mobilise the nation in resisting British interference. In this latter attempt he is having little success so far as I can at present judge, though no doubt he will greatly intensify his efforts when he realises that he personally cannot conciliate His Majesty's Government. I fancy, however, that the more the Iraqis reflect upon the danger and consequences of falling foul of Great Britain the less they will want to sacrifice themselves for the benefit of Rashid. Ali Jaudat (recent Minister for Foreign Affairs) made a point of telling me yesterday that he knew it to be quite untrue that Jamil Madfai would support Rashid any more than he would himself (see first part of paragraph 5 of my telegram No. 734).

To-day I have pointed out to Nuri Pasha (who is still functioning as Minister for Foreign Affairs) that I had never said that Iraq must choose between the Prime Minister and its relations with Great Britain. He replied that he knew this and gave the explanation that this statment had been inserted by some of his colleagues in order to make such Iraqi [? dependence] more pointed. I have also spoken to the M[illegible] paragraph 4 of your telegram No. 622 and read certain passages from your telegram No. 615 including one showing that you had no desire to interfere with internal affairs or do anything inconsistent with the dignity of the Iraqi State and the whole of paragraph 7. Paragraph 8 was too corrupt for me to use, but the correction has since been decyphered.

To-morrow I will make the attitude of His Majesty's Government clear to the Regent and will report on steps which he may have in mind for the elimination of Rashid.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 225.)

E 3042/495/93] No. 232

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(*Received December 6.*)

(No. 743.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, December 5, 1940.*

RELATIONS with Iraq.

My American colleague called this morning to inform me of communication to the following effect which he was about to make to the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs on instructions of his Government:—

2. Policy of United States Government is to give to Great Britain in the present [illegible] Iraq will therefore make a most unfortunate impression in the United States. Moreover, comparisons to the detriment of Iraq will be drawn between its attitude and that of Turkey. United States Minister was furthermore instructed to point out that continuance of Iraqi independence depended on a British victory. He was to inform me of this communication and also our Turkish colleague.

3. I have naturally kept my American colleague informed of situation, but I have never made any suggestion for action on his part, nor did he in any way indicate that above step by his Government is [? in response] to any suggestion of his own. While obviously based on his reports, initiative, so far as I am aware, was entirely that of United States Government, and it will be seen that their communication could not have been better timed or more helpful. In any message of appreciation which your Lordship may think fit to convey to United States Government I should be grateful, should there be no objection, if some expression could be added of my own gratitude and keen sense of the value of M. K[illegible] at all times.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 227, and Angora, No. 91.)

E 3020 448 93 No. 233

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received December 6.)

(No. 744.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, December 5, 1940.*

MY telegram No. 742.

In course of long audience 5th December I read to the Regent passages from paragraphs 4, 5 and 7 of your telegram No. 615 and he took notes. As regards elimination of Prime Minister, I explained the attitude of His Majesty's Government was that shown in paragraph 3 of your telegram No. 622. I pointed out that although in speaking confidentially with Regent and Minister for Foreign Affairs, I had certainly made it clear that his departure was essential to the restoration of good relations, I had made no statement to that effect to the Prime Minister when he had sought me out, and it was Rashid Ali's fault if he advertised that this was in fact the position. I also referred to communication by United States Minister (see my immediately preceding telegram), and to the light it threw on the situation created by Prime Minister.

2. Nuri Pasha, who was present, seemed confident that a majority of his colleagues were agreed that Rashid Ali must go, and thought that it might be possible to pass vote of "no confidence" in the Chamber. In any case he would be prepared to make public his own resignation at an appropriate moment in the Chamber, and to attack the Prime Minister on a number of domestic grounds. He hoped, however, before Prime Minister fell to be able to induce him to commit himself to a public declaration of the support which he had so often professed in private, for Anglo-Iraq Alliance. In reply to certain comments of mine he promised that if a satisfactory declaration could not be extracted within the next few days there would be no further delay in action to bring about the fall of the Prime Minister.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 228.)

E 3020 448 93] No. 234

Viscount Halifax to Sir B. Newton (Baghdad).

(No. 636.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, December 9, 1940.*

YOUR telegrams Nos. 734 and 735 (of 2nd December). Political situation in Iraq.

Situation appears to be that Iraqi Government are now awaiting a further communication from me to know whether explanations furnished by Iraqi Chargé d'Affaires have caused His Majesty's Government to modify their view that they can no longer place any confidence in Rashid Ali's assurances. They seem also to expect to be told whether or not there is any basis for some reconciliation between His Majesty's Government and Rashid Ali's Government. It will therefore be necessary to make it clear to the Iraqi Government that it is quite impossible for us to modify our views or to attach credence to any assurances from Rashid Ali regarding his willingness to co-operate with us in future.

2. It may be well to recapitulate [illegible] Government which have led us to form this conclusion. First, there is the resumption of these suspicious [illegible] with Italy and Germany. Iraqi Chargé d'Affaires' explanation that this was merely routine correspondence which had always been maintained since the beginning of the war does not correspond to the facts; if intended to cover telegraphic communications, if not so intended, it is irrelevant. Secondly, there is the suppression by the Iraqi Government of public criticism of the German declaration, and here again the [illegible] being unfounded, as the Chargé d'Affaires [illegible] General Nuri himself, when he told you, as reported in your telegram No. 652 (of the 4th November) that it was Rashid Ali who was responsible for suppression of criticism.

3. There are also the complaints enumerated by you recently to the Regent (cf. your telegram No. 715 (of the 27th November). Of these by far the most important is that Rashid Ali's Government have failed to break off diplomatic

relations with Italy and are attempting to maintain a footing in both camps. It is this refusal properly to carry out the policy based on the Anglo-Iraqi Alliance which is the basis of most of our charges against Rashid Ali. Indeed, the Iraqi Government have been openly tending towards a policy of "neutrality" between us and the Axis Powers. This "neutral" policy is reflected in the Iraqi wireless and press, to which the Iraqi Government have failed to give active pro-British guidance.

4. Moreover, the Iraqi military authorities, undoubtedly with the knowledge of the Iraqi Government, were until [illegible] Palestinian malcontents, whose one desire is to make trouble for us in Palestine. The Iraqi Government have also tolerated and [illegible] hostile activities are directed towards the renewal of the civil disorders in Palestine. His Majesty's Government have [illegible] Government not to allow their territory to be used for such activities, which, if successful might impede our military effort.

5. In addition to the foregoing complaints, there are other serious matters which [illegible] specifically inform the Iraqi Government, but which show conclusively that Rashid Ali has been intriguing with the Germans [illegible] Iraqi Government who, when the German declaration was made, showed their [illegible] by seeking to be furnished with [illegible] Government are understood to be contemplating the supply of [illegible]

6. In all the circumstances it is out of the question for us to help [illegible]

7. You should therefore inform Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs [illegible] that I have been unable to accept as valid the explanations offered on the two specific points to which you had drawn attention of Iraqi Government in [illegible] to co-operate with us in the future. You could then add something on lines of paragraph 3 of my telegram No. 622 (of the 3rd December).

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 1481.)

E 3020 448 93] No. 235

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received December 13.)

(No. 766.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, December 12, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 636.

I spoke to Minister for Foreign Affairs this morning in terms of first paragraph [illegible] No. 744 [illegible] your views.

2. I then recapitulated the gist of your second and third [illegible] where necessary by suitable repetition. I asked what was now the position of Prime Minister.

3. Minister for Foreign Affairs said that he expected that Prime Minister intended to make his statement in connexion with Anglo-Iraqi alliance (see my telegram No. 744) on 14th December, and that this would be published in the press and broadcast on the following day. After this, he himself would address a letter to Prime Minister (with a copy to the Regent), in which he would suggest that lack of uniformity and harmony made it difficult for the Cabinet to give proper effect to Prime Minister's declaration and would refer to domestic issues which increased their weaknesses.

4. Nuri Pasha claimed that Taha and Umar Nazmi would support the views put forward in this letter, and he hoped that, by summoning a special Cabinet meeting to discuss it, the Regent might be able to bring about resignation of Cabinet.

5. If this plan failed (and Nuri Pasha did not conceal his fears that Regent might prove too weak and inexperienced to carry it through), he hoped to be able secretly to organise in the Chamber a vote of no-confidence in the Government. He thought, if the Prime Minister were then taken by surprise and given no opportunity to evade such a plan, it might be carried out by a two thirds majority.

6. My attitude was that there should be a minimum of delay in securing the desired result by whatever means were appropriate.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 231.)

E 3020/448/93 | No. 236

Viscount Halifax to Sir B. Newton (Baghdad).

(No. 641.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, December 14, 1940.*

MY telegram No. 636 [of 9th November: Political situation in Iraq].

I am most anxious that present successes against Italians should be exploited to the full. I assume that in the circumstances Rashid Ali is less likely than ever to be able to secure sufficient support to carry on in spite of our disapproval. It would be well to press hard for an immediate change of Government. Do you think that opportunity could also be taken to ensure that new Government will at once sever relations with Italy? Iraq should, of course, have done so in June, but I trust will no longer be influenced by over estimate of Italian military [illegible]

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 1527.)

E 3092/448/93 | No. 237

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received December 15.)

(No. 771.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, December 14, 1940.*

IN view of my knowledge of your attitude, and in particular paragraph 3 of your telegram No. 636, and in order to strike while the iron was hot, I felt justified in taking the first opportunity of pressing strongly for the removal of the Italian Legation.

2. I therefore told the Minister for Foreign Affairs this evening that its retention had been poisoning Anglo-Iraqi relations for long enough. We had no [illegible] war and no desire to involve her unnecessarily [illegible] victories, of the establishment of Axis forces in [illegible] inflicted on the Italian forces in Egypt, it was now obvious that there could be no such danger, and the sooner, therefore [illegible]

3. I explained that, [illegible] subject from my Government [illegible] presence of the Italian Legation at Baghdad, and [illegible] ment was its failure to break off diplomatic relations with Italy. The Italian Legation at Baghdad [illegible] us, and its removal would be essential if Anglo-Iraqi relations were to be restored [illegible] a better footing.

4. I [illegible] a clerk, and that abnormal consignments had been reaching the legation under cover of diplomatic bags. In the present circumstances it was clear that its activities, which were carried on under cover of the immunities and protection granted by the Iraqi Government, were directly hostile to Iraq's British [illegible] activities were being considerably increased. Incidentally, I mentioned [illegible] the Axis declaration [illegible]

5. The Minister for Foreign Affairs agreed with my remarks, but said that it would be a pity to press Rashid Ali at this moment, as, if he gave way, it would make it more difficult to turn him out of office. He said that he thought the right time to press this [illegible] follow his letter (see paragraph 3 of my telegram No. 766). The projected declaration by Rashid Ali [illegible] reasons, and should there be further delay your Lordship may think it opportune to apply strong pressure, perhaps on the lines indicated in my immediately following telegram.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 234.)

E 3092/448/93

[illegible] December 15.

(No. 772.)
(Telegraphic.) [illegible] 14, 1940.

MY immediately preceding telegram.

I might be instructed to inform Iraqi G[illegible] Majesty's Government consider retention of the Ital[illegible] tent with the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty [illegible] Government have n[illegible]

2. [illegible] Majesty's G[illegible] to accord to Ira[illegible]

(*a*)—(1) Supply of dollars from United Kingdom to be stopped.
(2) No more credits in any currency to be opened or negotiated [illegible]

(*b*) Suspension of further shipments under credits agreement.
(*c*) Immediate introduction of navicert system to Iraq in order to [illegible]

Of 30 ships which entered Basra in past six months, 54 were British, 10 American, 10 Dutch and only 9 Japanese. Restriction of shipping would therefore be powerful lever.

4. Co-operation of United States Government under [illegible] assurance, as I am informed, that introduction of dollars credits available in United States for exports to Iraq is already being restricted.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 235.)

E 3092 448 93] No. 240

Viscount Halifax to Sir B. Newton (Bagdad)

(No. 663.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, December 21, 1940*

YOUR telegrams Nos. 771 and 772 [of 14th December: Political situation in Iraq].

I approve your action.

2. Since it is most unlikely that Rashid Ali would agree himself to carry through the severance of relations with Italy, I doubt whether General Nuri's argument need deter us from pressing this issue. There is, however, another argument which has hitherto caused me to hesitate to instruct you definitely to press Iraqi Government to choose this moment to break with Italy, namely, that such a request might provide the Prime Minister with better platform for rallying support than his present line that we are interfering in internal affairs of Iraq. Italian reverses should have weakened opposition to rupture with Italy but I leave it to your discretion to decide whether it is preferable to make definite issue out of matter before Rashid Ali resigns, or to get rid of him first and then let it be known that His Majesty's Government regard rupture with Italy as essential prerequisite of the establishment of normal relations with us. In any case, if challenged on the point, you should, I think, certainly make it clear that His Majesty's Government will regard this step as essential.

3. As stated in my telegram No. 641 [of 14th December], I think that we must press hard for immediate change of Government. I am not at all attracted by complicated scheme evolved by General Nuri [your telegram No. 766 [of 20th December]] and note that there has already been delay in getting ahead even with first stages of it. Unless he has made definite progress by the time you receive this telegram, I think that you should press him as strongly as possible to adopt what seems the much simpler course of making public his resignation and leaving Rashid Ali, with what support he can find, to cope with the difficulties caused by his unwise provocation of His Majesty's Government and their friends. You may tell him that I find it increasingly hard to understand that, when he [illegible] importance for Iraq of a policy of close co-operation with this country, he can remain any longer in a Government headed by a man whose deliberate aim is the reversal of that policy.

4. I have reason to think that Iraqi Government are fully alive to possibility of pressure, economic and otherwise, from us and our friends. In your telegram No. 772 you suggest that we should threaten to take economic sanctions against Iraqi Government if they do not meet our requirements by a given date. As a means of pressure action should be even more effective than threats, and I have already arranged that applications for dollars shall be either refused or held up. Request that contract for telephone exchange should be brought under credit has also been turned down (see my telegram No. 611 [of 29th November]), and urgent consideration will be given to the question whether any of the further steps [illegible] ect forthwith. (I should warn you that [illegible] be regarded as a means of [illegible] Government intend to [illegible] Iraqi Government may later [illegible] that, until we are satisfied as to policy of Iraqi Government we can, and will, do nothing to assist them in economic matters. You may instance dollars, credit and purchases in Iraq, but should not, of course, give the impression that our economic pressure will stop there.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 1591.)

E 3092 448 93] No. 240

Viscount Halifax to Sir B. Newton (Bagdad)

(No. 664.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, December 21, 1940*

MY immediately preceding telegram.

I am increasingly doubtful about role that General Nuri is playing in this matter. If, therefore, he either refuses to make known his resignation or finds excuses for further delay, I think that we should take some fresh step. For example, you might inform the Regent that we consider that the present [illegible] of tension cannot be allowed to continue indefinitely. You might also, unless there are local objections, suggest that Regent should call the Council of Ministers, inform them that he is himself convinced that we are not prepared to co-operate with present Iraqi Government and ask Rashid Ali point blank how he thinks Iraq can carry on without such co-operation. Regent could point out that it is obviously quite impossible for Iraq to carry out anti British policy without [illegible] help and, if Rashid Ali has to admit that he has not obtained concrete pro[illegible] from anyone else, or alternatively, if he alleges that he is relying on pro[illegible] from Germany, Italy or Japan, Regent should make it clear that in his view Government ought to resign.

Repeated to Cairo, No. 1592.)

E 3135 203 93] No. 241

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax — (Received December 26.)

(No. 539 E.)
My Lord, *Bagdad, December 2, 1940*

WITH [illegible] No. 679 [illegible] 1940 [illegible] 1939 regarding the final figures of the receipts and expenditure of the Iraqi Government for the financial year 1938-39, I have the honour to enclose a statement(*) showing the corresponding figures for the year 1939-40.

2. The final position of the Government accounts may be summarised as follows:—

	Receipts.	*Expenditure.*	+ *Surplus* / − *Deficit*
Ordinary budget	6,093,053	6,369,148	− 276,095
Capital works	3,114,503	2,232,916	+ 881,587
Total operations	9,207,556	8,602,064	+ 605,492

The surplus of I.D. 605,492 on the total operations reduced the accumu[illegible] deficit [illegible] I.D. 931,545 [illegible] additional income on capital works account derived from the first annual payment of £1 million of Iraq Petroleum Company's £3 million loan to the Iraqi Government.

3. The accumulated deficit of I.D. 326,053 at the end of the year 1939-40 proved to be considerably lower than the estimated deficit of I.D. 500,000 mentioned in paragraph 7 of my despatch No. 271 E. of the 10th June last and based on information furnished by the Ministry of Finance. As regards the [illegible] I.D. 276,[illegible] on the provisional figure given in paragraph 6 of my above-mentioned despatch and is approximately I.D. [illegible] higher than the budget estimate.

4. I am sending a copy of this despatch to the Department of Overseas Trade.

I have, &c.
BASIL NEWTON

(*) Not printed.

E 3012 G] No. 242

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received December 27.)

(No. 53.)

HIS Majesty's Ambassador at Bagdad presents his compliments to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and, with reference to Bagdad telegram No. 707 dated the 25th November, 1940, has the honour to transmit to him a copy of an aide-mémoire, dated the 25th November, 1940, from Sir Basil Newton to Minister for Foreign Affairs, Bagdad, on Iraqi foreign policy.

Bagdad, November 26, 1940.

Enclosure in No. 242.

Aide-mémoire.

HIS Britannic Majesty's Government have learned with dissatisfaction of [illegible] of public telegraphic communication between Iraq and Germany and Italy. While [illegible] Government must in future take the greatest care in matters where their action must give the impression of being aimed against the interests of the Anglo-Iraqi Alliance and might therefore have very serious consequences indeed for Iraq.

His Majesty's Government consider that action of a similar nature has been taken by the Iraqi Government by their suppression of public criticism of a certain German declaration of sympathy with Arab countries which was recently broadcast from Germany and Italy.

Bagdad, November 25, 1940.

CHAPTER III. PALESTINE.

E 6069/6611/31] No. 243

Mr. Baggallay to Signor Fracasi.

Dear Fracasi, *Foreign Office, January 1, 1940.*

ON the 5th December you asked me whether I could give any reply to the suggestion already made by the Italian Embassy that, upon the occasion of the final withdrawal of Italy from the League of Nations,(1) a reciprocal most-favoured-nation agreement should be concluded between Italy and Palestine.

2. His Majesty's Government have considered this suggestion, in consultation with the High Commissioner for Palestine, and have reached the conclusion that at the present juncture they would prefer not to complicate the already complicated position in regard to Palestine, by fresh agreements of this kind. No discrimination is at present made in Palestine between members and non-members of the League of Nations, and there is no present intention of according to Italy anything other than the same treatment that is accorded to countries members of the League of Nations in all commercial matters.

Yours sincerely,
LACY BAGGALLAY.

(1) December 11, 1939, i.e. two years from the notice of withdrawal.

E 50/50/31] No. 244

Memorandum respecting the Interest of Saudi Arabian Government in the Palestine Question.

THE Saudi Arabian Minister called here this morning in order to say good-bye before leaving on a short visit to Saudi Arabia.

2. Sheikh Hafiz Wahba began by discussing the present position with regard [illegible] in view of the [illegible] must inevitably prevail until the whole question has been decided afresh by the Cabinet, involved a certain amount of skating on thin ice. I think I succeeded in sending him away, however, without, on the one hand, suggesting that the possibility of some change in our policy was not entirely excluded, or, on the other, reasserting positively that the policy would stand.

3. Sheikh Hafiz stressed the need for early and visible proof that His Majesty's Government meant to put the White Paper into effect, and in this connexion remarked on the bad impression which, he said, was being made upon the Arabs by illegal immigration. I tried to convince him that, since the illegal immigrants were deducted from the annual quotas for legal immigrants, this traffic had, since the issue of the White Paper, ceased to have the same practical importance as before from the Arab point of view. He said that this might be so, but that if illegal immigration continued at the rate proclaimed in the Jewish press it would, the Arabs feared, mean that far more than 75,000 Jews would have entered Palestine long before the five-year period was finished. I told him that the traffic undoubtedly presented new problems which His Majesty's Government had not yet succeeded in solving in an entirely satisfactory manner. For various reasons which I gave him, it was not, for instance, nearly so easy as he [illegible] origin. But nevertheless I hoped that long before the traffic reached the figure of 75,000 we should have found effective means of preventing it.

4. Sheikh Hafiz then asked whether it would not be a good thing if he suggested to Ibn Saud that the Arab rulers should make an appeal to the people of Palestine to co-operate with the Allies in the present war on condition that His Majesty's Government declared their intention of implementing the White Paper. He said he had recently discussed this idea with the Egyptian

[illegible]

the subject was now in suspense because His Majesty's Government could not make any gesture (*e.g.*, a promise about a general amnesty) such as the Arab rulers said they needed before they could make any general appeal for peace, the impression was that for the moment nobody was pursuing the idea at all and as things were going quite well in Palestine I felt at least some personal doubt as to whether it would be wise for Sheikh Hafiz and the Egyptian Ambassador to reopen the question. Sheikh Hafiz said he was very glad I had told him this. It had in fact been his object to find out whether such difficulties existed. He always preferred to do things quietly, in a personal way, without the press publicity which certain other nameless persons found so attractive.

5. Sheikh Hafiz then mentioned the Palestinians living abroad. He said that as he would be passing through Egypt shortly, on his way to Mecca and returning back through Bagdad and possibly Damascus on his way home in March he would be seeing most of the members of the former Arab Higher Committee. He would tell them (always excluding the Mufti) that if they wished to return to Palestine he thought they would find there is nothing to stop them, provided they undertook to observe the l[illegible].

6. Before leaving Sheikh Hafiz asked that any new developments in the Palestine problem (he undoubtedly means any prospects of our taking the first steps in the constitutional policy) should be notified to Mr. Stonehewer Bird, with whom he would keep in close contact.

L. BAGGALLAY.

January 3, 1940.

E 36 36 31 [illegible]

Sir M. Lampson to Viscount Halifax.—(Received January 3, 1940.)

(No. 384. Saving.) (By Bag.)

(Telegraphic.) *En clair.* *Cairo, December* 22, 1939.

MY telegram No. 373, Saving, (of 12th December).

Auni Bey Abdel Hadi, at his own request, met oriental secretary to-day.

2. Auni said that friends of his had been approached with the suggestion that they should apply for permission to return to Palestine, and that the permission would probably be granted.

3. It was impossible, he said, from the moral and practical points of view for the excluded persons to apply for permission to return. Such application would have to be of a collective nature, for any single person applying for permission would expose himself to attacks and would, moreover, be humiliated in Arab eyes.

4. He urged that the Palestine Government should simply issue an order cancelling the exclusion orders against those persons whom it now was prepared to readmit. The result of such action would be that each person concerned would [illegible] own individual interests. He himself, for instance, would not return [illegible] present. He had enough money to live on modestly here. The military authorities, who had no personal knowledge of the Arabs, were now supreme in Palestine and could do what they liked. This was perhaps natural in time of war. In these circumstances he preferred to live on quietly here awaiting better days. Others, however, who were in serious financial embarrassment or whose interests imperatively called for their return, would be anxious to take advantage of the cancellation of their exclusion orders. Neither the Mufti nor anyone else in that case could object to such individual returns.

5. Auni went on to urge that His Majesty's Government should now put [illegible] rebellion during the war. It was generally realised that any such attempt would in war conditions be suppressed at once. The Arabs were awaiting the end of

the war before making any move, for they realised that any hostility to England now would compromise their position. He pointed out that the real Arab difficulty in accepting the white book was due to the fear that His Majesty's Government, under Jewish influence, would eventually go back on it. The concrete objections to the white book, moreover, were concerned with the future state of affairs at the end of five years or so, not to the initial stages of the white book policy.

6. The oriental secretary suggested that Arab co-operation was implied in the white book policy. Auni said that Arab co-operation would be forthcoming if the Palestine Government, in implementation of the white book policy, would introduce into the administration non party Arabs of serious stamp and not men of the Nashashibi type. There were already in the administration a number of Arabs in relatively high positions, and there was no reason why they should not gradually be promoted to headships of departments, &c. The Arabs realised that the white book policy, if carried out, gave them the assurance of a stoppage of Jewish immigration. That was the essential Arab requirement, and if His Majesty's Government implemented this assurance Arab co-operation would come about almost naturally.

7. Auni Bey asked that his statements, which were personal, should be treated as strictly confidential.

[illegible] to Jerusalem, No. 16, Saving; Bagdad, No. 17, Saving; Jedda, No. 8, Saving; and Damascus, No. 1, Saving.)

E 75 31 31] No. 240

Viscount Halifax to the Marquess of Lothian (Washington).

(No. 16.)

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, January* 4, 1940.

MY telegram No. 948, of 25th December, Palestine.

You should continue to treat my telegram No. 943 [of 24th December] as in suspense, as matters at issue are under consideration here. In the meantime [illegible] allegations reported in your telegram No. 33, Saving, [of 24th November]:—

(*a*) There is no ground for belief that total immigration to be allowed during five years following appearance of white paper in May 1939 is to be reduced below figure of 75,000, provided that the criterion of "economic absorptive capacity" permits of that figure. [illegible] Majesty's Government are anxious to facilitate Jewish [illegible] into Palestine to full extent permitted by white paper. As an earnest of this intention, they have taken very considerable trouble to enable refugees who were still in Germany after outbreak of war but who had certificates for Palestine, to immigrate to Palestine. They certainly would not have done this if they sought to reduce immigration figures.

(*b*) There is no ground for belief that any undertaking was ever given that the 25,000 refugees provided for in the white paper would be admitted during the first year. What was said was that these 25,000 would be admitted as soon as High Commissioner was satisfied that provision for their maintenance was assured. This might have been within any period—short or long, up to five years, according to circumstances prevailing. As it turned out, economic conditions in Palestine and wave of illegal immigration rendered situation uncertain, and made it impossible for High Commissioner to feel any assurance about any figure approaching 25,000. Indeed, on account of extensive illegal immigration into Palestine (which involves under the white paper equivalent deductions from annual quotas), no quota was issued in respect of six monthly period which began on 1st October last. However, a large number of refugee and other Jews who had been granted immigration certificates in the previous quota period had not actually entered Palestine by 1st October, and validity of their certificates has been extended. Immigration has consequently been continuous up to date.

(e) It is untrue that restriction of land sales on lines contemplated in the white paper has been put into force. This matter is at present under consideration of His Majesty's Government

2. As soon as final decision on policy has been reached, I will telegraph a full appreciation of the position, including the decision of His Majesty's Government in the matter of land regulations. I will also furnish material for reply to telegram from Dr Brandeis and his friends, of which text is contained in my telegram No. 944 [of 24th December]

E 180 38 31 No. 247

Sir M Lampson to Viscount Halifax —(Received January 12.)

(No 34.)
(Telegraphic.) *Cairo, January 12, 1940*

MY telegram No. 384, Saving.

Hafez Wahba on his way to the Hejaz called on the oriental secretary on 11th January He had seen Auni the previous day and the latter had acquainted him with the views which he had expressed to the oriental secretary (see my telegram Saving, under reference)

2. Hafez Wahba said that from a conversation with Mr Baggallay a week ago he had understood that we were prepared to agree to the return of all members of the Supreme Arab Committee, except the Mufti and one other

Hafez Wahba therefore supported Auni's proposal as regards procedure [illegible] Once this was done he thought that Arab co-operation with us on lines of the white book would develop naturally He said that Ibn Saud was most anxious to help in the matter, and enquired whether he could give him any indication of our views He asked that answer might be conveyed to him (Hafez) through the British Minister at Jedda, whither he is proceeding on 12th January

3. He was told that his enquiry could only be referred to the Foreign Office

4. Hafez Wahba laid great stress on the importance of action in the above sense in order to counter the continuous and dangerous German propaganda on the subject of Palestine

(Repeated to Jerusalem No 1, Beirut, No. 2 (Saving); Bagdad, No. 2, Jedda No. 2, and Damascus, No 1)

E 173 31 31 No. 248

M Weizmann to Viscount Halifax —(Received January 13, 1940.)

Avenida Fontes, Lisbon
Portugal, December 29, 1939

Dear Lord Halifax,

Your letter of the 19th has reached me late on the same day As I had to leave early the next day I could not answer it immediately, and had to postpone doing so until I have reached here, where I have to wait for a day or two before taking the "Clipper"

I confess that your letter came rather as a shock But I don't propose to trouble you with a lengthy answer

I am not competent to judge whether the policy of the White Paper, [illegible] before it could be implemented The House, however was most anxious to hear the opinion of the League on the subject and many references were made in the debate to the Mandate Commission, whose report was awaited with the keenest interest The outbreak of the war, which has taken place a few days after the publication of the report by the Permanent Mandates Commission, has removed the whole problem to a second plane, and all discussion of it was suspended. But the opinion expressed in the report of the Mandates Commission leaves no room for any doubt that the White Paper is incompatible with the mandate as interpreted hitherto by His Majesty's Government Whatever the legal point of

view adopted by the Colonial Office may be, their moral attitude is open to a very serious doubt.

We are now, as before, uncompromisingly opposed to the policy of the White [illegible] is, and will continue to be, unconditional. Nevertheless, there is no reason why unnecessary and unjustified hardship should be inflicted on us at a time when every day brings in its train untold destruction of Jewish life and property

I fervently hope that Europe will be rid of the Nazi cankor, and we all realise only too well the decisive rôle which England is playing in this gigantic struggle for the preservation of moral values forming the very foundation of our civilisation, and just because of this knowledge I had hoped that you would not like to see anything done which might prejudice the Jewish future.

After victory has been won the Jewish problem will still be there in all its ghastly nakedness as a challenge to the new world which may arise, and I am deeply convinced that only in Palestine and through Palestine an equitable and lasting solution can be found

May I be allowed to offer you my best wishes for a better and happier 1940

Yours very sincerely
CH WEIZMANN

W 766 38 48 [illegible]

[illegible]

(Confidential.)

(Memorandum prepared jointly by the Foreign Office and Colonial Office, December 1939 January 1940.)

[illegible]

THESE are largely political. Illegal immigration into Palestine is not primarily a refugee movement. There are, of course, genuine refugees among the [illegible] Jews from Poland to Roumania and other Balkan countries. The countries in which Jewish refugees have found temporary refuge (and the Western European countries are not excluded) are unlikely except under pressure, to take active steps to prevent any movement which will relieve them of their refugee population

2. There has always been a certain amount of illegal Jewish immigration into Palestine, but the traffic has attained its present dimensions only since the publication of the white paper on Palestine of May 1939 (Cmd 6019). The white paper limits Jewish immigration to a maximum of 75,000 spread over [illegible] limitation, which will leave the Jews in a minority in Palestine. They maintain that it is contrary to the mandate and they boast that the Government will be unable to implement it. By encouraging and organising illegal immigration the Zionists intended to defeat the limitation imposed by the white paper and ultimately to increase the Jewish population of Palestine to a majority which will give them a dominating position in the country

3. Various organisations and individual speculators are concerned in [illegible] parties, whose programme is a mass immigration into Palestine and Transjordan, and who possess an illegal military organisation in Palestine. The illegal immigrants whom the New Zionists transport to Palestine are carefully picked and trained young men of military age, and young women, not the old men and women and children, who would be in the van of a true refugee movement

4. [illegible] immigrants succeeded in entering Palestine, as compared with approximately [illegible] was a lull in the traffic during the first two months of the war, but there are now signs of its revival

II.—*Organisation and Methods*

5. Many parties are organised in Germany and proceed down the Danube by river steamers. The Gestapo are known to assist the Jews in organising and despatching these parties. It is clearly to the interest of the German Government to promote this traffic, since it serves the double purpose of ridding them of Jews and causing embarrassment to His Majesty's Government. Other parties are organised in the Eastern European countries. Embarkation on sea-going vessels takes place at ports at the mouth of the Danube and on the Black Sea coast of Roumania and Bulgaria, or by transhipment in the open sea outside territorial waters in the neighbourhood of those ports. A few cases have been reported on the Adriatic coast and in Greece but none recently. The ships engaged in the traffic are usually small, old, overcrowded, insanitary, and generally unsafe. Since as much as £25 to £30 a head is known to have been charged for passages, it seems probable that large fortunes are made by the owners and charterers.

III.—*Counter measures in Palestine. Difficulty of making them Effective.*

6. The penalties for participating in and aiding and abetting illegal immigration have been strengthened very considerably in recent years. They now are:—

(*a*) Individual illegal immigrants: 6 months' imprisonment and or deportation.
(*b*) Masters and crews of ships: 8 years' imprisonment and a fine of £1,000.
(*c*) Ships: Forfeited to Palestine Government if under 1,000 tons net; if over 1,000 tons net, the ship itself can be condemned in a sum of £1,000 and held as security pending payment. The owner is liable to a fine of £10,000.

7. There are, however, numerous difficulties in making these and other preventive measures effective. As a result, the impression has been created in some quarters that the Palestine Government and His Majesty's Government are secretly conniving at illegal immigration (an impression carefully fostered by the Jews). It is therefore necessary to describe these difficulties in some detail. [illegible] possible, from approaching the coast. The patrol was operated in the first place temporarily by ships of the Royal Navy, and now by armed motor launches of the Palestine Government. The patrol launches cannot, of course, operate outside territorial waters, but within these limits they have power to stop and search ships, and to order them to leave Palestine waters if they are found to have illegal immigrants on board. They are empowered to use such force as is necessary, to the extent of firing into the ship, in order to compel it to obey orders. In practice, however, the power of firing into the ship cannot be exercised in view of the serious political consequences of firing into and perhaps sinking a ship filled with "refugees." When a patrol launch once fired its Lewis gun on an illegal immigrants' ship and two Jews were killed, indignant protests were raised on grounds of humanity, leading to questions in Parliament. Confidential instructions have [illegible] in any way that might lead to the injury of persons on board. Thus the patrol vessels cannot enforce compliance with their orders. Nowadays, however, the larger ships carrying illegal immigrants usually do not attempt to enter Palestine territorial waters. Instead they bring with them in tow or on board a number of small boats into which the passengers are unloaded outside Palestine territorial waters [illegible] the small boats run ashore with the co-operation of the inhabitants of Jewish villages on the Palestine coast. Even if the small boats are intercepted by the patrol launches they cannot be turned back as this would mean the death of the passengers from starvation and thirst. Even if such orders were given the boats would certainly refuse to obey, and there is no alternative but to seize the [illegible] A sea patrol and coast guard service cannot therefore *prevent* landing of illegal immigrants [illegible] can only ensure that most of them are detected and arrested on arrival.

9. Once an illegal immigrant has [illegible] impossible to deport him. Illegal immigrants are commonly stateless, [illegible] who are not take care to destroy their passports and all other evidence of identity before they approach the coast. It is, therefore, impossible to establish the country of origin for the purpose of deportation under existing international practice. Attempts have been made, so far without success, to bring home the responsibility to the country which allowed the ship to sail.

10. Imprisonment of illegal immigrants in Palestine is no deterrent. Their object is to get into Palestine. They realise that, once there, they cannot be kept indefinitely in prison, and a spell of internment is probably no great hardship in comparison with their previous conditions of life. Moreover, unless there is some prospect of deportation, internment imposes upon the Palestine Government the cost of maintaining the illegal immigrants indefinitely. In most cases, therefore, formal deportation orders are made and the immigrants are released, after a short period of internment for quarantine purposes, to become a burden on the local Jewish community.

11. Under the provisions of the white paper illegal immigrants who cannot be deported are deducted from the quotas of legal immigrants. This, however, is no deterrent to the illegal immigrants themselves.

12. The principals behind the traffic, the ship owners and Jewish organisers in Europe, cannot be touched by the law of Palestine. The seizure and confiscation of the larger illegal immigrant ships and the imprisonment of the master and crew, would probably have considerable deterrent value, in spite of the fact that this would mean allowing the immigrants themselves to land and thus to achieve their object. The difficulties in the way of seizing ships which do not enter Palestine territorial waters have already been explained. It is particularly difficult at the present time to claim the exercise of the right to search and arrest on the high seas on the suspicion of intention to commit an offence within the jurisdiction of the Palestine Government. The possibilities of surmounting this difficulty are, however, being examined.

IV.—*Counter Measures in Europe*

13. As it is obviously impossible to touch the main source of the traffic which is in German territory, the objective of the counter-measures must be to prevent the transit and embarkation of parties of Jews in countries bordering on Germany. The measures so far taken are, of course, largely familiar to His Majesty's representatives concerned. The Governments of the "transit" countries have been urged not to grant transit visas to Jews possessing (as is usual in these cases) no visa of final destination, or an obviously bogus one, *e.g.*, for Shanghai or San Domingo. They have been asked to prevent embarkation at their ports and to refuse all facilities to ships engaged in the traffic. The Greek Government, at the request of His Majesty's Government, have enacted a law penalising the participation of their merchant marine in the traffic. This legislation has been evaded by the transfer of ships to other flags, principally the Panamá flag. The Government of Panamá have agreed to cancel the registration of such ships in cases where sufficient evidence of complicity is available. The results of this line of attack have been moderately satisfactory, but the ships which engage in this kind of traffic can usually find some flag to cover them, and it is not always easy to persuade Government after Government to take the necessary preventive measures.

14. The status of the Danube (the main artery of this traffic) as an international waterway, impedes effective action by the Governments through whose territory it flows, and gives them a useful excuse for not interfering with a traffic which helps to rid them of their surplus Jewish population. The Bulgarian police [illegible] bound illegally for Palestine. Even where the intentions of the central Government in the transit countries are sincere, these intentions are liable to be defeated by the inefficiency or venality of subordinate executive officials.

15. Practically every illegal immigrant ship has to pass through the Bosphorus on its way to Palestine. An attempt to stop them at this bottle-neck has, however, been frustrated by the Montreux Convention. The most the Turkish Government can do is to delay ships on the pretext of sanitary inspection [illegible] the Suez

V —*Conclusion*

16. The problem is thus an organised invasion of Palestine for political motives, which exploits the facts of the refugee problem and unscrupulously uses the humanitarian appeal of the latter to justify itself

17. It assumes the status of a major political problem because of its effect on Arab opinion in Palestine and throughout the Middle East. The fundamental cause of the disturbances in Palestine has been the Arab fear of being "swamped" by the Jews. The Palestine white paper of 1939 is designed to allay Arab fears on this score by limiting Jewish immigration, as described in section I. The Jews are determined to defeat this limitation by any means in their power and thus to overthrow the policy of His Majesty's Government Illegal immigration is the result

18. A fundamental factor of the Palestine problem is the deep-seated distrust on the part of the Arabs of the determination of His Majesty's Government to carry out any declared policy which is favourable to them They assert that His Majesty's Government are subject to Jewish influence and unable to withstand Jewish pressure. This distrust can only be overcome by demonstrating the honesty of our intentions [illegible] tries that His Majesty's Government mean to abide by the limit placed on Jewish immigration, but the large-scale illegal immigration of recent months which [illegible] is causing an increasingly serious reaction among the Arabs. They are driven to conclude that His Majesty's Government either cannot or do not wish to enforce their decision in the face of Jewish opposition It is assiduously put about by the Jews both in Palestine and in Europe that His Majesty's Government are secretly conniving at illegal immigration

19. If illegal Jewish immigration continues to grow worse, it is likely to wreck the prospects of a settlement in Palestine created by the white paper of 1939 It might well precipitate a revival of the Arab rebellion and postpone indefinitely a rapprochement between the Arabs and Jews in Palestine should this occur, British relations with the Arab countries in the Middle East, who follow events in Palestine very closely, would be seriously jeopardised, and troops which are urgently required elsewhere would be immobilised in Palestine It is as much to the interest of European Powers friendly to Great Britain as to His Majesty's Government themselves that the stability of the British position in the Middle East should not be upset at this time Those Governments in Europe which permit or encourage the transit or departure of illegal immigrants are promoting one of the most dangerous threats to this stability

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E 249 31 31] No. 250

Sir B Newton to Viscount Halifax —(Received January 18)

(No 2. Saving)
(Telegraphic) *En clair* *Baghdad January* 16 1940

CAIRO telegram No. 384, Saving, Washington telegram (unnumbered) of 27th December and your telegrams Nos. 944 and 902 to Washington of 24th and 31st December, 1939

Minister of Justice, after dinner with me the other night, showed considerable anxiety at the influence on the Palestine question which was being exerted by Jews in the United Kingdom, but especially by the Jews in the United States of America.

Minister, who expressed himself in a very moderate and friendly way abstained from any reference to the pressure that has been brought to bear on [illegible] I told him that the best and indeed only effective contribution which Iraq could make towards the solution of the problem of Palestine was to smooth the road for progress with the White Paper policy

2

Such advice, which I propose to repeat whenever the Iraqis discuss with me the question of Palestine, will of course lose its force unless there is some progress before long to which we can point We claim, I understand, that conditions in Palestine have greatly improved, so that it would seem to follow that corresponding progress can be made with the implementation of our promises Should there be none to show after a whole year, I fear we shall have strengthened the hands of the extremists and of those who maintain that results are only to be obtained by pressure and that the time to exercise such pressure is during the war

I realise that the present time may not be convenient, but greatly fear that no time will ever be, and that the future may be much less convenient It certainly would be if we suffered any reverses, when pan-Arab extremist agitation would undoubtedly revive and concessions would look as though they were granted out of weakness rather than strength

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 1 (Saving), Jedda, No. 2 (Saving), and Jerusalem No. 1 (Saving).)

E 416 416 31 No. 251

The Marquess of Lothian to Viscount Halifax.—(Received February 1)

(No 65)
My Lord *Washington, January* 17, 1940.

WITH reference to my telegram No 971 of the 27th December, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copies of the *New Palestine* of the 12th January, containing the texts of the principal speeches delivered at the two-day conference of the United Palestine Appeal, which was held in Washington on the 6th and 7th January (¹) I understand from the American Zionist Bureau here that the conference was considered a success

2 Having an engagement in Chicago I was not able to attend the dinner, although the French Ambassador did so. I sent, however, a message of regret and of tribute to Dr Weizmann (who was to have been present but was detained in Europe by the interruption of the air service) and my message was, I understand, read out to those present The text is printed on p. 17 of the enclosure to this despatch (¹)

3 [illegible] Mr [illegible] Murphy, Attorney-General and Justice-designate of the Supreme Court, and by the French Ambassador [illegible] praise of tolerance, while the latter dwelt on his personal contacts with Palestine and with the problems of the Near East

4. The speech which aroused the most interest was made by Mr Duff Cooper The text will be found on pp 3 and 12 of the enclosure to this despatch (¹) In brief, the speech was an assertion that though His Majesty's Government had tried for twenty years, mostly in good faith, to govern Palestine fairly as between Jews and Arabs, their policy had failed because its basis was unsound. That being so, His Majesty's Government should make up their mind to "regard this question with bias upon one side or the other" Mr Duff Cooper had no [illegible] be the Jews, and that in Palestine they should eventually be both the majority and sovereign The Arabs who elected to remain should have their minority rights guaranteed, while those who chose to emigrate to other Arab territories [illegible] "It seems to me" he said "that the land [illegible] made twenty years ago we should wipe out now and redouble" As you may imagine, the speech was very well received, though personally I doubt whether

(¹) Not printed

[illegible]ent circumstances it contributed either to lessen the difficulties of Great Britain or to promote reconciliation between Arab and Jew. In fact, it reminded me more of the solution which Herr Hitler is endeavouring to apply to the race problem in Europe than of the traditional policies either of the British Commonwealth or of the United States.

I have, &c.
LOTHIAN

[E 530 36 31] No. 252

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received February 6.)

(No. 30.)
My Lord, *Baghdad, January 18, 1940.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 2, Saving, of the 10th January, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that in recent talks both the Prime Minister and the Minister for Foreign Affairs have indicated to me that, as a result of the publication in Jerusalem on the 5th December last of the High Commissioner's communiqué concerning the return to Palestine of those against whom no formal exclusion orders have been issued, a number of Palestinians now in Iraq are thinking of going back to their homes.

2. The Ministers have explained, however, that among these people there was some nervousness as to what might happen to them if they did so. Although this was not said, no doubt some have uneasy consciences, and others may fear that information will be laid against them by their enemies. The Prime Minister has also stated that a number of men have recently been arrested in Palestine and sent for trial before the military courts, including two who, he alleges, returned from Syria after the 5th December. The names he gave me were Muhammad Mahmud Abu Shaban of Lofta and Mahmud al Antabli of Jerusalem. He thinks that this fact has added to the nervousness of those in Iraq who are thinking of going back. The Minister for Foreign Affairs is anxious that the homeward movement should be encouraged, because he realises that there are now too many Palestinians in Iraq and that the return [illegible] would help to restore normality and [illegible]. The suggestion was raised that this movement might be speeded up if it were possible for him to give me privately the names of those wishing, but afraid, to go, so that I could enquire from the High Commissioner in Palestine whether or not these persons would be liable to be arrested if they returned. From the point of view of Iraq, it seems to me very desirable that as many Palestinian refugees as possible should return to their own country, where, moreover, they can, if necessary, be kept under proper supervision. I do not know, [illegible] the High Commissioner would welcome the suggestion that I should [illegible] the names of those who wish to return in order that they should be reassured about the intentions of the authorities concerning them. I notice that Sir Harold MacMichael in his telegram No. 40 of the 14th January to the Secretary of State for the Colonies reports that some of the excluded Palestine Arab leaders may soon be returning to Jerusalem. If they do so, others of lesser importance may be encouraged to follow their example.

3. The Prime Minister has also spoken to me about the position of those in Palestine who took part in past disturbances. He said that the fact that a number of recent arrests had been made had spread an impression that the authorities were determined to rout out and send to the military courts every man against whom there was evidence of complicity in the insurrection. He declared that this impression was exploited by agitators to frighten people from going back to Palestine, and he pleaded that prosecutions before the military courts for old offences against the State (by which he meant offences committed before the 5th December, 1939) should be reduced to a minimum, and if possible tried only in the civil courts. If it were not possible to act on these lines, he begged that at least the number of hangings for past offences should be kept as low as possible. His plea was that, as order had now been restored, ha[illegible] a deterrent was no longer necessary. It would suffice to imprison bad cases. Hangings, he maintained, kept enmity alive and helped the extremists to fight against the restoration of normal conditions besides adding to the difficulty of the Iraq [illegible] task of [illegible]. This has shown some tendency to increase of late owing, no doubt, to the influence of the refugees and agitators from Palestine, and perhaps also to the aloofness enjoyed by Iraq from the war, which permits indulgence in local grievances.

4. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassador at Cairo and to His Majesty's High Commissioner for Palestine at Jerusalem.

I have, &c.
BASIL NEWTON

[E 578 31 31] No. 253

Sir M. Lampson to Viscount Halifax.—(Received February 10.)

(No. 121. Secret.)
My Lord, *Cairo, February 2, 1940.*

I READ with the greatest interest and agreement your Lordship's telegram No. 943 of the 24th December last to His Majesty's Ambassador at Washington, of which a copy was enclosed in your despatch No. 1330 of the 26th December, regarding our Palestine policy, and the determination of His Majesty's Government to resist any pressure from either Jews or Arabs to modify our formally and publicly declared line of policy for the solution of the Palestine question.

2. An unambiguous and firm statement of policy of the above nature would greatly clarify the position in the Middle East and contribute powerfully to rally the Egypto-Arab world to the cause of the Allies. It would enable us to pursue the task of appeasement and of consolidation of British influence in the Near and Middle East without any of those unfortunate commitments which so greatly prejudiced our efforts after the last war. On the other hand, if we fail to take up such a clear and honourable attitude, and begin to show signs of hesitation, it is inevitable that we risk strengthening all those Arab elements which persistently argue that nothing is to be hoped for from England and that the only chance of the Arabs lies in such a general weakening of Great Britain in the [illegible] we have refused to give them of our own free will. Moreover, any repudiation or weakening of a definite policy so publicly announced must inspire increased distrust in British promises. Many of our post-war difficulties in the Near and Middle East have been due to just such a general feeling that the England of to-day was no longer the England of the past, on whose word peoples could count absolutely and completely.

3. It was therefore with considerable alarm that after perusal of that wholly admirable telegram—if I may be permitted so to call it—to Lord Lothian, I came [illegible] to suspend action on the previous telegram pending further instructions. I sincerely hope that this second telegram, the further telegram to Washington (No. 16 of the 4th January) which has since reached me under cover of Foreign Office despatch No. 32 of the 10th January, and paragraph 2 of Mr. Baggallay's memorandum regarding his conversation with Sheikh Hafez Wahba (enclosed in Foreign Office despatch No. 48 of the 16th January) do not mean that there is any wavering in the firm attitude adopted in the first instance. That my fears are shared by the General Officer Commanding-in-chief, Middle East, is shown by the enclosed extract from a letter which General Wavell sent me after I had shown him your Lordship's despatch No. 1350.

4. It is becoming more and more clear that Arab reluctance to co-operate with us in the policy laid down in the white paper is largely due to the fear that His Majesty's Government, under Jewish pressure, will sooner or later modify that policy to the disadvantage of the Arabs. The delay in making a start with the implementation of the white paper and the continuance of Jewish illegal immigration have accentuated the Arab fears in regard to our intentions. This is the more deplorable in view of possible extensions of the war to the East and of German efforts to undermine our position by propaganda and by support of extremist elements against us.

I have, &c.
MILES W. LAMPSON

Enclosure in No. 252

General Wavell to Sir M. Lampson

(Extract.)
(Most Secret.)

General Headquarters, Middle East,
Cairo, January 30, 1940

My dear Ambassador,

. . . . . .

I HAVE not for a long time read any document on our policy with greater pleasure than that quite admirable telegram to Lord Lothian. I felt it to be what everyone out here connected with Palestine has been waiting for for a long time. I was correspondingly depressed when I turned the final page and found a further [illegible] postponing the issue of the statement. I can imagine nothing more [illegible]g to British prestige and honour in this part of the world than that we should once again yield to Jewish pressure, and go back, even in the least degree, on the terms of the White Paper.

. . . . . .

I do not think you can urge too strongly this question.

. . . . . .

Yours sincerely,
ARCHIE WAVELL.

E 624/50/31] No. 254

Mr. Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax. (*Received February 12.*)

(No. 26.)
(Telegraphic.)

Jeddah, February 12, 1940.

CAIRO telegram No. 34 and Bagdad telegram No. 2, Saving.

Emir Faisal has asked me, on behalf of Ibn Saud, to [illegible] Lordship that the policy at present being pursued in Palestine is [illegible] doubts in the minds of all Arabs as to His Majesty's Government [illegible] implement their promises. White paper had gone far towards appeasi[illegible] opinion, but months had elapsed and nothing had been done. A [illegible] administrative post had been offered an Arab, sales of land continued, and the Jews could boast that immigration figures for the past year are 35,000, already nearly half the full five years' allowance.

2. As regards the return and subsequent treatment of exiles, Ibn Saud counselled the greatest possible generosity and courtesy. He concluded by saying that the Arabs had no love for the Germans, but they listened with interest to German broadcasts in Arabic because they contained news about Palestine. We were thus helping our enemies by providing them with material for anti-British propaganda in Arab speaking countries.

3. The position as I see it from here is very exactly summed up in the last two paragraphs of Sir B. Newton's telegram under reference.

Repeated to Cairo, No. 13, Bagdad, No. 13, and Jerusalem, No. 14.)

E 646/416/31] No. 255

Viscount Halifax to the Marquess of Lothian (*Washington*).

No. 227.)
(Telegraphic.) R.

Foreign Office, February 12, 1940.

GERMAN Transocean News of 9th February published mischievous propaganda report of Dr. Weizmann's interview with President Roosevelt, at which it is stated that you were present.

2. Report states:—

"Dr. Weizmann told press that Palestine had been discussed [illegible] reported that Zionist leader asked President to support his request for increasing Jewish immigration into Palestine, which British Government at present considered inopportune, particularly as London had to make certain [illegible] immigration of Jews till after war, presumably because British interest in Arab people would then not be regarded as urgent."

3. Please telegraph particulars.

E 612/20/31] No. 256

Colonial Office to Foreign Office.—(*Received February 12.*)

THE Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith a copy of correspondence between the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the High Commissioner for Palestine respecting the internal situation in Palestine.

Colonial Office, February 10, 1940.

Enclosure 1 in No. 256

Sir H. MacMichael to Mr. MacDonald

[illegible]

December 31, 1939.

I HAV[illegible] r to refer to your secret telegram No. 984 of the [illegible] in which you ask me for a full appreciation of the internal [illegible] alestine, with particular reference to the situation in the rural [illegible]

Having given a general picture of the state of affairs as I see it, I will deal with certain further points as to which you have asked for my opinion, and end by explaining more exactly the precise nature of the measures of leniency which the general officer commanding and I have in mind.

2. The war for Palestine, as all the world knows, centres largely upon the problem of Jewish immigration. The attitudes of Arabs and Jews respectively towards it are familiar, but it is important to bear in mind that the discrepancy between two articles of the Jewish faith, one tenaciously believed but seldom formulated, and the other formulated with the knowledge that it is fallacious, has placed the Jews in a false position. On the one hand it is held that Palestine is Eretz Israel destined to be ruled by the Jews, although as a matter of temporary convenience, a condominium is accepted to which His Majesty's Government is admitted as a partner under the name of mandatory. On the other hand, the admitted right of the Jews in Palestine to live there "not on sufferance" is interpreted as conferring upon all Jews the right to enter Palestine without let or hindrance. Were the "condominium" converted to a Jewish *dominium*, the Jews would themselves be compelled in their own interests to control immigration, for they realise full well that unrestricted immigration spells ruin to their well planned economy and degradation for their ideals. But so long as the responsibility for controlling immigration rests upon His Majesty's Government, the political value of the resultant odium seems to outweigh the evils of illegal immigration in the eyes of those who are more politically than ideally inclined. They are not even prepared to share with His Majesty's Government a responsibility which they are able to evade, and at least one eminent Jew has stated that his chief reason for condemning "partition" was that it would involve the Jews in [illegible] immigration to Palestine, its flow would probably continue under the pressure of circumstances in Europe until such time as an alternative refuge was found.

3. Having [illegible] the Government of Palestine in respect of the previously proclaimed campaign of civil disobedience, for they perceive that, without such an armistice, their present difficulties will be augmented. Unemployment and destitution are rife in the towns, and the settlements and colonies, which are by no means self-supporting, are feeling the strain severely. The state of the citrus trade and [illegible] by violent dissension between the bodies of the left and the right and the centre concerning the allocation of such funds as are available or can be raised by "voluntary" levy. Each main body is sub-divided into groups of equal

obstinacy. All want money, but some would raise it in one way and some in another, some would employ Arab labour, in the joint interests of racial co-operation, economy or Marxian theory, some would not, either on principle or because of the outcries of the Jewish unemployed, some would spend the money raised or expected from America upon building schemes, some upon repayment of debts, some upon social services, some upon relief in the form of a dole. To Mr Rutenberg has fallen the unenviable task of bringing all parties into line by cajolery or threats, and no one is better qualified than he to succeed. Whether he will do so must remain very doubtful. His organising capacity is great. He has vision and determination, but he shows little deference or sympathy for the agency, he eschews short-term politics, he loathes illegal [illegible] nihilists, and he believes in the employment of Arab labour. His struggle continues, but its course is strewn with casualties. Fracas in the towns, strikes and picketings are frequent, and feelings are unlikely to cool down unless the inevitable increase in unemployment is more than offset by the subventions confidently expected from America.

4. The sight of Jewish dissension naturally induces a feeling of pleased encouragement in Arab circles, and, quite apart from this, there are signs of an increasing desire for co-operation. It is due in part to common sense, in part to perspicience of benefits to be anticipated, in part to weariness, in part to sympathy, and in part to the efforts which are being made by moderate men of all races and opinions inside and outside Palestine to further the cause of good will and condemn political opportunism. On the other hand, the Arabs know that illegal immigration merely awaits opportunity and that the Jewish drive for land purchase continues without any overt hindrance from His Majesty's G[illegible] The whole [illegible] emotional basis, but these factors keep scepticism, suspicion and caution alive.

5. In the Arab villages the position is much improved. Harvests have been good and the rains promise well. There is a general friendliness in [illegible] atmosphere which is easier to feel than to define, and smiles are seen where lour[illegible]ing looks were the order of the day. Taxes are coming in fairly well and without serious pressure. The general cry is for protection and, needless to say, monetary assistance for schools and agriculture. The latter demand is perennial and calls for no unsympathetic comment. The former is due to the insecurity which is still rife. Rebellion, as such, is no more, but many who were lately known as "mujehidin" ("holy warriors") still survive under the opprobrious name of "haramiya" ("robbers") and are able to terrorise the villages by sudden descents upon them with a well armed posse demanding money and food. [illegible] generally successors available who find a brief career of buccaneering more profitable and congenial than the routine of ploughing stony fields or driving an ill paid quill. Though a number of successful "peace meetings" have been held, [illegible] a village that harbours enemies. It is still foolishly rash for anyone to travel on foot or with transport after dusk, and though officials of the Government are welcomed upon arrival at any small town or village, there is yet no question of dispensing with an escort for them, for there is no reasonable certainty as to what they may meet *en route*. I may, perhaps, give a single illustration of the position. During the intermediate years of peace in Palestine, I am told, it was a common habit for members of the community to ride or walk freely for recreation over the hillsides outside the towns, and to call at any village without fear of molestation. If one of them now resumed the practice, he might do so with impunity upon half a dozen occasions, but on the seventh he might be shot, [illegible] nineteen hundred years ago.

6. None the less it may be said that the state of public security has greatly improved during the last few months and especially during the last few weeks. Lesser issues have been subordinated to greater and the outbreak of war has provided an occasion for a truce in Arab–Jew hostilities of which both parties were heartily tired. It has at the same time led to a reorientation of political tactics. Arabs and Jews alike have been compelled to devote their attention to the vital question of ensuring their stocks of food, materials, money and work; both have been glad of the excuse to call a halt of internecine strife, but both, in reserving their "rights," have implied—the Jews more specifically than the Arabs—that the war must be turned to political account. The Arabs adopt the characteristic but deceptive pose of knowing that they can rely upon the gratitude and generosity of His Majesty's Government, the Jews the equally characteristic and more realistic attitude of determination to attain their ends by one means or another. Both parties are divided into factions, but the units of division are dissimilar. Among the Arabs village is against village, man against man. Of the political parties of the past only one, the Defence party survives, and that is in the throes of an internal crisis and viewed askance by the generality of Arabs. Its leader is a "past number," its erstwhile secretary Fakhri Nashashibi, has gone too far in the fields of politics and morality [illegible] even for the strongest stomachs, and only Suleiman Bey Tuqan of Nablus and the Mayor of Jaffa remain respected figures in or on the outskirts of the party. Whether a new "moderate" party will take shape by amalgamation with members of the Defence party, or to their exclusion, is not yet sure, but there are signs of the possibility if and when some of the "exiles" choose to return.

The Jewish divisions are two fold and follow European models, with capitalist interests opposed to those of labour, organised labour resentful of unorganised labour, and all the variegated theories of the political economists in full play. Behind these motives and intersecting them is the deeper conflict of ideals that persist between the different schools of Zionism.

At the moment, comparatively speaking, politics are at a discount on account of more immediate preoccupations ranging from the citrus crop in the coastal plain to the village vendetta in the hills, and the strength of the British garrison is sufficient guarantee against any immediate recrudescence of rebellion [illegible] a wearied population. But to the question—"Is it peace?" there can [illegible] one answer—a negative.

Paragraph 7 deals with the state of security in various districts of Palestine.

Paragraph 8 deals with the extent to which various departments of the Administration are now working under normal conditions.]

[illegible] in my secret telegram No. 1412 of the 22nd November are likely to provoke a claim, at any rate on the Arab side, that "peace and order" have been sufficiently restored to justify proceeding with the first stage of the constitutional measures provided for in paragraph 10 of the white paper, and (*b*) whether, if such representations were received, I should consider it desirable or defensible to reject them. I find no difficulty in replying to any of these questions, and will take them in turn.

(*a*) The phrase "on the Arab side" may refer to the Arab States or to the Arabs of Palestine. The former group, with whom may be associated the "exiles" and those who pin their faith to the ex Arab Higher Committee, will, of course, in their own interests lose no opportunity, irrespective of local conditions in Palestine, of pressing for even wider concessions directed to the constitution of an Arab State, whether independent or part of a greater Arab congeries. Whether they would press for the more modest proposal of the white paper, including its limitations and implications, I am doubtful.

Of the rest of the Arabs of Palestine, the Defence party have already [illegible] disclaimers, ask for implementation of the promise in the form of appointments for themselves. The others, who are still leaderless, would be unlikely to do so. Those who are politically-minded would prefer to wait upon events and the return of some of the "exiles" in the hope of getting more, and those who are more [illegible] by the landlord politician class.

I may remark that in the course of many conversations which I have had since the publication of the white paper with Arabs of every type in towns and villages, in public and in private, in large concourses and small, I can remember no single instance of the constitutional proposals being mentioned. Illegal immigration, land sales and the return of the "exiles" have figured largely. Frequent and urgent appeals for the release of detainees have been made, but,

for the rest, it is money for seed loans, work and the relief of destitution, that have been the main themes. On these occasions it is naturally the hope that lies nearest to the heart that receives expression, and I have never heard a word about "heads of departments." "Heads of departments" were offered as a sop to Cerberus, Cerberus turned away in disdain and the sop was left on the shores of Styx. No one seems anxious to pick it up. To the Arabs it has a doubtful scent, to the politically faithful Jew it is unclean.

(*b*) Certainly, if representations were unexpectedly received, it would be wise to reject them. The war has created a temporary lull in Palestine, but it will be apparent from the background which I have sketched above that the reign of "peace and order" is yet to come. There are many arms still hidden in the hills, money, now lacking, will always produce recruits in Palestine, there is no settled restful feeling of confidence and satisfaction, and, so soon as the war ends, and possibly earlier if all does not go well, the strife is likely to break out anew. So far from either side having receded from its position, each has been driven to crystallise claims which are impossible of acceptance by the other, and [illegible] ends, has any real desire to see control pass from British hands. Moreover, whether or no in any case "peace and order" can be held to have been restored while a war is in progress and its course is uncertain, a temporary phase due to adventitious circumstances can hardly be said to constitute the new order of [illegible] to taking the first step toward new constitutional measures, and it can hardly be contended that the measures of leniency which I have proposed carry with them a corollary in the constitutional field. The present state of affairs does not conflict with the idea of mercy in the form of releases from detention and forgiveness for peccadilloes of a lesser kind. It does, to my mind, conflict violently with the introduction of constitutional experiments, and the more so in that these would certainly precipitate a renewal of the most ardent antagonism. Mercy can easily be rescinded at short notice, political concessions cannot; mercy is practised as a matter of justice and expediency whenever circumstances permit, but constitutional experiments require a more permanent setting.

10. I pass now to the actual measures which are in contemplation by the general officer commanding and myself.

The first question which we considered was the action to be taken in regard to (*a*) excluded persons, and (*b*) other Palestinians who have left the country for a variety of reasons, and who, for purposes of convenience, may be called "absentees."

The term "excluded persons" is only applicable to those against whom there is a formal exclusion order. These are few in number and are the leaders who were considered responsible, at least in the moral sense, for the campaign of [illegible] orders of exclusion has already formed the subject of separate correspondence and does not figure in the present proposals.

As regards absentees, the general officer commanding and I take the view that their return would not constitute an amnesty, but is a purely administrative matter necessitating no great change in existing procedure. They must, however, be divided into two groups, those against whom no action would be taken if they returned, and those who would, if possible, be arrested and brought to book [illegible] should be taken, and when this list has been agreed between the civil and military authorities we consider that in the interests of good faith it should be communicated unofficially to the neighbouring countries. Certain of the returning absentees, too, will probably have to be placed under police supervision from the first, and their names would also be communicated to neighbouring countries in a similar way.

The next question is that of detainees, and in this case, also, special lists are being prepared in collaboration between the military and civil authorities. These lists will be sent to military area commanders, who will be entitled to revise them in the light of local conditions after consultation with the administrative and police authorities of the area concerned. Thereafter, military area commanders will begin to issue orders for the release of those detainees who are not included in the special lists. In ordering such releases the area commanders will decide which, if any, of the persons concerned should be placed under police supervision.

In [illegible] the question of exercising clemency in favour of some of the persons convicted by military courts, it has been agreed that it would be best to adopt the principle of remitting the whole of the remainder of a sentence where it appeared that the prisoner could be released without danger to public security, in preference to reducing sentences. Each case would be considered on its merits, and the primary guiding principle would be whether or not it would be dangerous to release the prisoner concerned, rather than the severity of the original sentence. The intention is that a special committee should be set up for this purpose, which would report to the general officer commanding, and he, in turn, would make his recommendation to me on each case. The exact composition of the committee has not yet been decided, but it would be in the nature of a civil and not a military body, although it is agreed that it should include a senior military officer.

As a necessary corollary to the reviewing of military court sentences, it will also be necessary to examine the cases of persons who were sentenced by the civil courts for offences connected with the disturbances before the establishment of military courts. Those cases will be examined by the Attorney General, who will submit his recommendations to me. I should mention that it is not intended that either persons sentenced by military courts or persons sentenced by civil courts, [illegible] which may be brought against them other than the actual offence for which they have already been sentenced.

There remains the question of armed outlaws who are still at large in Palestine, some of whom might be glad in present circumstances to lay down their [illegible] brought to trial.

After discussion it was decided that there should be no proclamation or publication of a pardon, as this would, in effect, constitute a form of amnesty requiring the sanction of His Majesty's Government. The general officer commanding and I [illegible] this respect would be on the following lines:—

(i) Power to award the death sentence for carrying arms should be abolished. This alteration to the Emergency Regulations would be given wide publicity.

(ii) It should be made generally known without formal pronouncement that in view of the better situation now prevailing in Palestine the general officer commanding was prepared to treat certain crimes more leniently.

(iii) Military commanders should continue to award detention but where considered advisable they should suspend the sentence.

I hope that the news of the abolition of the death sentence for carrying arms and of the adoption of greater leniency on the lines mentioned above, together with the other measures referred to in this paragraph, will have a pacifying effect, and the general officer commanding and I [illegible] in two or three months' time in the light of the results obtained.

I have, &c.

H. A. MACMICHAEL,
High Commissioner for Palestine.

Enclosure 2 in No. 256.

Mr. MacDonald to Sir H. MacMichael.

[illegible]

Colonial Office, February 9, 1940.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your secret despatch of the 31st December, and to thank you for your comprehensive and illuminating account of the present internal situation in Palestine.

2. I am in general agreement with the measures of leniency described in paragraph 10 of the despatch. I note in particular that it is considered that some

modification of the Emergency Regulations may now be contemplated. In view of the substantial progress towards the restoration of normal conditions which has taken place in recent months, I share your view that steps should now be taken to moderate the rigour of legislation which was framed to meet the needs of a situation of grave emergency, and I consider that it would now be appropriate to undertake a detailed examination of the regulations with a view to eliminating such of them as are no longer essential.

3. In my telegram No. 57 of the 23rd January I referred to certain representations which I have recently received from the Secretary of State for War. As stated in that telegram, Mr. Stanley has urged very strongly that, in view of [illegible] even to the Middle East, it is essential that the military forces retained on internal security duties in Palestine should be reduced to a minimum, and that civil control should be re-established at the earliest possible date. In particular, Mr. Stanley urged that the military authorities, whose chief preoccupation should be the prosecution of the war, should not continue for any longer than is necessary to bear the burden of administering the military courts and to incur the odium inseparable from the exercise of these functions. In his view it was not too much to say that, in existing conditions, Palestine, the only territory in the Eastern [illegible] in fact unsuitable as a base for the military forces in a Middle Eastern campaign.

4. I understand from paragraph 1 of your telegram No. 82 of the 30th January that the whole question of internal security in relation to the minimum garrison and the date of the resumption of civil control is now under consideration in consultation with the General Officer Commanding the Middle East, and I assume that the question of the possibility of the abolition of the military courts is being examined in this connexion. If this should be found [illegible] will require modification, since I assume that it would be your intention that all offences against the Emergency Regulations should thenceforward be tried by the ordinary criminal courts. You will no doubt consider at the same time whether, for purposes of trying offences against the Emergency Regulations, a more summary procedure than that which at present exists is required. In connexion with your review of the Emergency Regulations, I shall be grateful if you will [illegible] detention without trial.

5. As regards the review of sentences by the military courts or the civil courts for offences in connexion with the disturbances, I agree generally with [illegible] that even greater latitude would be obtainable if consideration was given to the possibility in doubtful cases of releasing the persons concerned on probation so that it would be open to the authorities, in any cases in which a man broke his recognizances for good behaviour, to imprison him on his original conviction for the completion of his sentence.

6. It will be desirable in the near future to consider the policy to be adopted in the matter of the periodic review of such sentences as are not remitted at this stage. In his confidential despatches of the 29th November, 1934, and the 7th June, 1935, your predecessor described the procedure which he had adopted of granting annual remissions and reductions of sentences passed during the disturbances of 1929 on a systematic basis, on the occasion of the King's Birthday. I understand that this procedure was found to have considerable political advantages, and I would suggest that the precedent is one which it might well be found convenient to follow.

7. With reference to paragraph 9 of your despatch, I will address you shortly in a separate despatch on the question of constitutional development.

I have &c.

MALCOLM MacDONALD

E 687 416 31 No. 257

The Marquess of Lothian to Viscount Halifax.—(Received February 15.)

(No. 212.)
(Telegraphic.) *Washington, February 14, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 227.

At the President's request, I took Dr. Weizmann to see him last Thursday. Dr. Weizmann was very moderate in his statements to the President, and said that, now that German and Italian attempts to create a civil war had failed, relations between Jews and Arabs were improving and that after the war he looked forward to a solution on Federal lines, with Jewish money helping the Arabs to migrate by consent of the other parts of Arabia. He did not complain [illegible] He did not ask the President to support increasing Jewish immigration into Palestine, nor did he suggest that England wanted to defer mass immigration of Jews until after the war. The President expressed interest and said that the Jews would be only one part of the vast European refugee problems after the war. Dr. Weizmann said that, while the Jews could no doubt be absorbed elsewhere, the only place where they would go with enthusiasm and with active support other than Jewish would be Palestine. The comparative figures of Jewish settlement in Palestine since 1920 and in other attempted Jewish colonies elsewhere abundantly proved this.

(R.) In a brief statement to the press after his interview, Dr. Weizmann made a quite innocuous statement to the effect that he had come to the [illegible] to consult with friends, "in order that we may maintain our position in Palestine." He quoted the President as being confident that after the war was over "a solution of the Palestine Zionist problem might be reached."

Yesterday I received a deputation from Jewish organisations here, including Perlzweig. After discussing one or two practical matters, they said that Jewish public opinion in America was entirely behind the Allies, though, in order to [illegible] had to stress their belief in American neutrality. They then asked about the [illegible] from Jews and Arabs to abandon the policy formally adopted by the last Parliament, that in its view that policy was not contingent upon approval by the League of Nations, that, so far as I knew, no action was being taken to implement land purchase powers at the moment, and that His Majesty's Government, having made pledges both to Jews and Arabs, could not default on either. The deputation seemed quite satisfied and went away in a friendly spirit. (End of R.)

E 658 31 31] No. 258

Viscount Halifax to the Marquess of Lothian (Washington).

(No. 252.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, February 17, 1940.*

MY telegram No. 16 (of 4th January: Palestine).

His Majesty's Government [illegible] Commissioner for Palestine to issue regulations controlling sales of land by Arabs to non-Arabs [illegible] May 1936. I [illegible] immediately following telegram I am communicating to you an outline of these regulations. Following paragraphs of this telegram contain material for your use in explaining situation to Dr. Brandeis and his friends, if you think this desirable. It seems to us that courtesy may require this explanation in view of the terms of their telegram of 15th November, but you may think it unnecessary and undesirable to make such an approach to them. This material will, in any case, enable you to deal with any other Jewish representations. It should be substituted for observations contained in my suspended telegram No. 243, of which no public use should be made. For your own information, our reason for this substitution is that, whilst we have not withdrawn from the policy stated in the white paper, we are anxious not to arouse fresh controversies by a public

[illegible] our position which might be considered provocative. You should [illegible] before the Land Regulations are being published in Palestine, and then only [illegible] their confidential information, and not for publication. If Dr. Weizmann is in or near Washington, I should be grateful if you could convey same to him confidentially. I will let you know as soon as possible date of publication of Land Regulations, which will be in near future.

2. It is generally recognised that the outbreak of war has projected into international affairs new considerations of paramount importance. In the opinion of His Majesty's Government, the fate of civilisation hangs on the issue of the war, and the German treatment of Jews shows conclusively that a happier future for world Jewry depends on the victory of the Allies.

3. Recognition by the people of Palestine of these tremendous issues and of the fact that Jews and Arabs have a common interest in the defeat of Nazi Germany has brought about a cessation of strife and new disposition to co-operate in that country. His Majesty's Government are anxious not to disturb this state of affairs, and they would have preferred it, if it had been possible, to postpone for the duration of the war any action in Palestine which might tend to revive political controversy.

4. But the land situation presents a special problem of exceptional difficulty and urgency. The *status quo* is not being maintained, for sales of land are still proceeding without regulation, and, as will be shown, the situation is being continuously altered in a way which is likely to present His Majesty's Government before long with a state of affairs calculated to prejudice gravely prospects of agreement between Jews and Arabs.

(R.) 5. In order to understand the position it is necessary to trace history of land problem since 1930, when Sir John Hope Simpson first warned the Government that, owing to the naturally increasing Arab population and their methods of cultivation, there was already a serious congestion of population over most of Palestine, and that there was comparatively little land left for settlement by new immigrants. Subsequent investigations all confirmed this view. The Royal Commission of 1936 expressed their unanimous agreement with the general conclusions of earlier investigators on the land problem. They recommended that transfers of land from Arabs to Jews should be allowed only where it is possible to replace extensive by intensive cultivation, that is to say, in the plains and not, at any rate at present, in the hills. The Royal Commission stated without hesitation that at present and, indeed, for many years to come the mandatory Power should not attempt to facilitate the close settlement of Jews in the hill districts generally. So far as the plains were concerned, the commission [illegible] also held that further settlement of Jews in such areas as were possible could best be secured by means of large-scale development by public utility companies, but they felt bound to state, in order to prevent undue optimism, that at present such areas were few and, as far as the commission could see, to be found only in the plains and not in the hill districts.

6. The Woodhead Commission, who examined in detail the possibilities of partition, confirmed the conclusions of the Royal Commission that, with the existing standard of cultivation and capital resources of the fellaheen, the land [illegible] the greatest caution should be exercised in regulating the transfer of Arab land to Jews in the extensive areas which under their proposals would be excluded from the Jewish and Arab States and would be retained under mandatory control. In their view, transfer of Arab land to Jews in the "mandated" areas should be permitted only when it was clear that the land in question was capable of closer settlement and when such settlement would result in benefit to Arabs and Jews alike. They were, however, unable to take an optimistic view of the possibilities of additional agricultural settlement in the "mandated" areas.

7. His Majesty's Government are convinced that it would be dangerous to ignore any longer the clear warnings from a series of authoritative and impartial commissions as to the serious and growing congestion of the Arab population in certain areas. Although these commissions have sometimes expressed differing views on other matters, they have all [illegible] the necessity for control of land sales. Leaving aside the obligations of His

Majesty's Government towards the Arabs under article 6 of the mandate and looking at the question merely from the practical point of view, if land sales remain unrestricted even for the duration of the war there is likely to arise a "landless Arab" problem of such dimensions that it will be extremely difficult to find any solution to it. Nothing is more likely to contribute to the possibility of renewed bitterness between Arabs and Jews, and to further violent disorders than the existence of a considerable landless Arab population, and, in fact, some restrictions on land sales are essential if we are to establish good government in Palestine.

8. The outbreak of war has not affected the urgency of a solution. Land purchases have not ceased. On the contrary, the High Commissioner reports that purchases are still being made and there is plenty of evidence that Zionist organisations are taking active steps to raise funds for the particular purpose of land purchase in Palestine.

9. After full examination of all these considerations His Majesty's Government feel that they have no alternative but to authorise the High Commissioner to proceed with the Land Regulations, providing for the delimitation of zones in which land sales from Arabs to Jews should, at any rate for the present, be restricted, prohibited or remain free respectively. It cannot reasonably be argued that these restrictions will involve undue limitation on Jewish development. Land purchases will not be stopped; they can be continued on a considerable scale in many areas which contain very good land, and the Negeb, to which importance is also attached by Zionists, is being reserved as a [illegible] There is room as yet for considerable additional Jewish settlement on the land which they already own.

10. The proposed regulations do not lay down boundaries between free, restricted and prohibited areas which are to remain fixed for all time. It will be open to the High Commissioner in the interest of Jewish settlement, if he is satisfied that the "rights and position" of the Arab population will be duly preserved, to review and modify any orders passed relating to the prohibition or restriction of the transfer of land. The policy of the Palestine Government is directed towards the development of the land and the improvement, where possible, of methods of cultivation. A good deal of attention has already been devoted by the Departments of Agriculture and Education to raising the standards of Arab husbandry, and it should be possible to make steady progress in this sphere of education when normal conditions are restored.

11. Another consideration is that this proposal to concentrate Jewish settlement in certain broad areas will facilitate a solution of the Palestine problem ultimately on federal lines, if that should prove to be the best solution.

12. Finally, it cannot be too often repeated that somehow and at some time the Jews and Arabs in Palestine will have to learn to live together in peace. In the view of His Majesty's Government the continuation of wholly unregulated transfers of land from Arabs to Jews is bound to exacerbate the present differences between the two [illegible] the harmony which alone can bring contentment in Palestine. Already since the war there are signs of an improvement in Jewish-Arab relations, and His Majesty's Government would be failing in their duty if they did not attempt to remove any obstacle which still stands in the way of the further development of so desirable a movement.

E 658/31/31] No. 259

Viscount Halifax to the Marquess of Lothian (Washington)

(No. 253.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Foreign Office, February 17, 1940.*

MY immediately preceding telegram [of 17th February: Palestine].
Following are the outlines of the land regulations referred to:—

In the delimitation of the zones, and in the application of the principles on which the [illegible] "restricted" areas and in permitted, the regulations follow closely the proposals made in the Woodhead Commission's Report; where there are variations from those proposals they are generally favourable to the Jews.

2. The hill country and the Gaza area (where there is congestion) and the Beersheba area (where survey and investigation of title have not yet been carried out) are to be areas within which further sales of land by Arabs to any person not a Palestinian Arab will, for the present at any rate, be prohibited.

3. In the plains, and in the Negeb, on the other hand, Jews will still be able to purchase land from Arabs either freely or subject to certain restrictions. Land purchases will be subject to no restrictions in the greater part of the [illegible] Negeb. However it is proposed that sales by Arabs to persons who are not Palestinian Arabs shall only be permitted with the [illegible] in the following classes —

(a) It is made for the purpose of facilitating the irrigation of, or consolidating or expanding, holdings already in the possession of the transferee or of his community, and the land to be transferred is contiguous to such holdings,

(b) It is made for the purpose of enabling land held in undivided shares by the transferor and the transferee to be parcellated or

(c) It is in furtherance of some special scheme of development in the [illegible] interest of both Arabs and Jews to which Government may [illegible] signified its approval.

4. Finally, the transfer of land in municipal areas throughout the country will remain unrestricted.

E 800/31/31] No. 260

Sir M. Lampson to Viscount Halifax.—(Received February 23.)

(No. 40. Saving.)
(Telegraphic.) *En clair.* *Cairo, February 17, 1940.*

Dr. SHAHBANDAR called on oriental secretary 10th February and [illegible] in Parliament. According to the *Ahram* report, Mr. MacDonald stated that the British Government would permit the immigration of the largest possible number of Jews into Palestine in the coming years and that it was not intended to abandon this decided plan. Mr. MacDonald added that the legal number of Jewish refugees allowed to enter Palestine slightly exceeds 10,000 every six [illegible] He [illegible] largest possible number.

2. Dr. Shahbandar said that such statements cut the ground from under the feet of all Arabs who, like himself, were trying to work for the Anglo-French cause in the war. The numbers cited by Mr. MacDonald, he argued, were in excess of the numbers laid down by the white paper policy. He thought that the proper reply to such a question should have been that His Majesty's Government could not permit immigration in excess of the numbers laid down in the white paper.

3. The accuracy of the above alleged statement of the Colonial Secretary differs in the *Egyptian Gazette*, but its telegram is corrupt and not understandable. Account in British official press of 14th February does not bear out *Ahram* version, but seems open to misinterpretation somewhat on lines of *Ahram* version.

4. I should be grateful for an early and correct version of Mr. MacDonald's statement referred to.

5. I need hardly emphasise the disastrous effect in these parts of any official statement in Parliament indicating that His Majesty's Government is permitting immigration in excess of the white paper policy. It would greatly help in dispelling suspicions if Arabic broadcast could give version of Mr. MacDonald's statement with, if necessary, explanations showing that white paper limits were not being, and would not be ex[illegible]

(Copied to Jerusalem.)

E 816/31/31] No. 261

Viscount Halifax to His Majesty's Representatives at Cairo (No. 96), Bagdad (No. 34) and Jedda (No. 15).

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, February 24, 1940.*

[illegible] policy of His Majesty's Government contained in my telegram No. 943 of [24th December,] 1939, to His Majesty's Ambassador at Washington were suspended almost immediately afterwards. The reason for this was that His Majesty's Government [illegible] been, owing to purely accidental circumstances, until shortly after that telegram [illegible]

2. The question has now been re-examined and, as a result of this re-examination, the position of His Majesty's Government has been defined in the following terms: That, while they have not withdrawn from the policy stated in the white paper, they are anxious not to arouse fresh controversies by any unnecessary public reassertion of their position which might be considered provocative. His Majesty's Ambassador at Washington has accordingly been informed that no public use should be made of the observations contained in my telegram No. 943. The text of my telegram No. 252 [of 17th February] to His Majesty's Ambassador containing these instructions will reach you in [illegible]

3. So far as your attitude and that of British officials generally is con[illegible] but that His Majesty's Government intend to proceed with the white paper policy [illegible] possible be avoided, and the actions of His Majesty's Government left to speak for themselves.

4. The actions of His Majesty's Government fall into four heads —

(1) Constitutional advance,
(2) Immigration, and especially illegal immigration,
(3) Land Regulations,
those three together constituting the white paper policy, and
(4) The question of leniency for offenders.

5. My immediately following telegram contains observations and instructions with regard to (1), (2) and (3), and the High Commissioner for Palestine is [illegible] to keep you informed direct about (4).

(Addressed to Cairo, No. 96, Bagdad, No. 34, and Jedda, No. 15. Repeated to Jerusalem, No. 149.)

E 767/31/31] No. 262

Viscount Halifax to His Majesty's Representatives at Bagdad (No. 3[illegible]

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, February 24, 1940.*

My immediately preceding telegram of 24th February. Palestine policy.

As long ago as May last an Order in Council was passed empowering the High Commissioner for Palestine to issue regulations prohibiting, restricting or regulating transfers of land in Palestine in accordance with the policy laid down in paragraphs 16 and 17 of the white paper. The working out of the many details connected with these regulations naturally took some considerable time.

2. The High Commissioner has now been authorised to issue regulations on 27th February. These provide for the delimitation of certain areas in which the transfer of land to any person not being a Palestinian Arab will be prohibited. In certain other areas such transfers will only be permitted with the sanction of

the High Commissioner, and sanction will not ordinarily be granted unless the transfer can be shown to be either—

(1) For the purpose of consolidating extending or facilitating the irrigation of holdings already in the possession of the transferee or of his community, the land to be transferred being contiguous to such holdings, or

(2) For the purpose of enabling land held in individual shares by the transferor and the transferee to be parcellated; or

(3) In furtherance of some special scheme of development in the joint interest of both Arabs and Jews to which the Palestine Government may have signified its approval. In the rest of the territory land purchases will remain unrestricted.

3. Ibn Saud and Egyptian and Iraqi Prime Ministers should be informed confidentially to this effect on 26th February.

4. In view of the terms of Jedda telegram No. 26 [of 12th February], it may be convenient at the same time to deal with the other points raised by Ibn Saud in connexion with the implementation of the white paper policy:—

(a) As regards the constitutional proposals in that paper, it will be recalled that the first step as set out in paragraph 10 (4) was not to be taken until "peace and order have been sufficiently restored." While great progress has been made in recent months towards the restoration of normal conditions in Palestine, it will be appreciated by Ibn Saud (Egyptian and Iraqi Prime Ministers) that this process must necessarily occupy a considerable time in a country which has been [illegible] period, and His Majesty's Government are not satisfied that conditions in Palestine are yet sufficiently normal to justify the introduction of the first stage of the constitutional development envisaged in the white paper or to offer it, if taken, reasonable prospect of success.

(b) As regards the question of immigration, Ibn Saud (Egyptian and Iraqi Prime Ministers) will be aware that Jewish immigration into Palestine has since 1st April last been regulated in accordance with the provisions of Part 2 of the white paper. In accordance with these provisions, some 8,600 Jews entered Palestine legally between that date and the 31st December. It is true that, in spite of the preventive measures taken by the mandatory Power and the Administration of Palestine, as many as 12,000 additional immigrants succeeded in entering the country illegally during that period, making a total of 20,600 immigrants altogether, as compared with the figure of 35,000 referred to by Ibn Saud. As laid down in paragraph 14 (4) of the white paper, the number of illegal immigrants is deducted from the yearly quotas, and it will be remembered that for this reason no quota was, in fact, issued for the current half year from 1st October, 1939, to 31st March, 1940. Both His Majesty's Government and the Palestine Government are making every effort to check this traffic and to render preventive measures effective, and during the past few weeks the captains and crews of two ships which have been brought into Haifa and have been found to be engaged in this traffic have been placed under detention in Palestine.

5. As [illegible] now being taken by the Palestine Government, the High Commissioner has been [illegible] position suitable for communication to Ibn Saud and Egyptian and Iraqi Prime Ministers.

(Addressed to Cairo, No. 97, Bagdad, No. 35, and Jedda, No. 16. Repeated to Jerusalem, No. 150.)

E 839/50/31

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received February 24.)

(No. 62.)
(Telegraphic.)

Bagdad, February 24, 1940.

(R.) JEDDA telegram No. [illegible]

Prime Minister has given me a list (taken from Palestine press) of twelve [illegible] who have not yet been executed. I have received from Jerusalem a summary of the charges against these men, and have again impressed on the Prime Minister that death sentences are only imposed when fully justified. (End of R.) He begged, nevertheless, that the possibility in certain cases of sentences to life imprisonment should be considered, saying that there was some precedent for [illegible] commutations. [illegible] and the need for summary justice was less pressing, persons charged with offences [illegible] (See my despatch No. 30 of 18th January.)

(R.) (Repeated to Jerusalem, No. 210, Cairo, No. 20, and Jedda, No. 4.) (End of R.)

E 809/31/31]

No. 264

Viscount Halifax to Sir M. Lampson (Cairo).

[illegible] not the intention of His Majesty's Government to permit Jewish immigration into Palestine in excess of the numbers laid down in the white paper and nothing has been said in Parliament to give rise to such an impression. The report in the *Akram* of Mr. MacDonald's statement is garbled and incorrect.

2. In reply to a question enquiring whether he would relax the severe restrictions on Jewish immigration, Mr. MacDonald said: "His Majesty's Government's policy allows for a very considerable immigration of Jews into Palestine over the next few years, and there is no question of departing from that policy."

3. In answer to a supplementary question, Mr. MacDonald said: "The legal [illegible] which I think is a very considerable figure of immigration."

4. [illegible] mean that 10,000 immigrants are to be admitted every six months. It is, in fact, well known that owing to the considerable number of illegal immigrants no quota has been issued for the current six months which began on 1st October.

5. The figure of 10,000 immigrants was an approximate one. In actual fact [illegible] 1939, and further immigration facilities were granted in the late summer for a few additional dependents of other immigrants. This total included (*a*) ordinary immigrants on the basis of the white paper maximum of 10,000 per year with the addition of (*b*) a proportion of refugees out of the white paper provision of 25,000 refugees who are to be admitted to Palestine as soon as provision for their maintenance is assured.

Extracts from the Speeches made by the Secretary of State for the Colonies and [illegible] Palestine Land Transfers Regulations on March 6, 1940

Question put—

"That this House regrets that, disregarding the expressed opinion of the Permanent Mandates Commission that the policy contained in the White Paper on Palestine was inconsistent with the terms of the mandate, and without the authority of the Council of the League of Nations, His Majesty's Government have authorised the issue of regulations controlling the transfer of land which discriminate unjustly against one section of the inhabitants of Palestine."

[illegible] sorry that this controversy should be raised at the present critical time. If I may utter a few personal sentences, I think I regret it more deeply than any other hon. member in this House. More than anyone else for the time being I have to bear the anxiety, the burden and the bitterness of this difficult contro[illegible] but by no means hopeless problem. I make no complaint about that, but I [illegible] say that I would be the very last member in this House to increase unnecessarily those anxieties and that bitterness, and I can assure the House that if it had been possible to maintain a firm and healthy peace in Palestine now by the policy of masterly inactivity I would consider myself doing nothing at all. It [illegible] we have decided is essential, first for the maintenance of good and impartial government in Palestine, and second to enable us to mobilise our forces to prosecute to a victorious conclusion the war against Nazi Germany, that we are troubling the House with this legislation to-day.

In moving the motion of censure upon us the hon. member for Derby (Mr. Noel Baker) and the right hon. baronet have presented various reasons why the House should censure us on this occasion. They have urged that these Land Regulations represent an unjust discrimination against the Jews in Palestine, [illegible] contrary, it seems to me that action for the control of land sales has become essential if we are positively to carry out the obligations put upon us by the terms of the mandate itself. What does the mandate say in regard to this land problem? It deals with it in article 6. Let me read what it says. First, the administration of Palestine shall encourage, in co-operation with the Jewish Agency, close settlement of Jews on the land. There is a qualification for that instruction which reads as follows: We are to encourage that while ensuring—

"that the rights and positions of other sections of the population are not prejudiced."

Hearing a great deal of commentary on these Land Regulations one would never suspect that that latter condition is contained in the mandate itself, but it is there. In fact, so far as article 6 deals with the land problem, it enshrines two obligations. They are complementary obligations. They are of equal importance and equal weight. One is to the Jews and the other is to the Arabs. We are to encourage close settlement of the Jews on the land right up to the point where that close settlement would prejudice the rights, the position, and the interests of the Arab population, and then we are to stop. What is the position when we [illegible] and plains of Palestine where the mandate is being carried out? For the last [illegible] settlement of Jews on the land. By the importation of capital, by skill, by an [illegible] have made barren places bear fruit. Where land was already fruitful they have multiplied its fruitfulness. To-day young Jewish settlements are scattered right through the plains. They have arrived at the border of the desert. They have penetrated up into the hills.

[illegible] 67,000 [illegible] imported to day in these Jewish [illegible] settlements. In their turn those settlements have fed a steadily and vastly expanding

Jewish population in the urban areas. Twenty years ago there were fewer than 60,000 Jews living in Palestine. To-day the figure has risen to very nearly 500,000. In that short span of twenty years, with the encouragement of Britain, the mandatory Power, more than 350,000 Jews have emigrated and settled in Palestine, in a country which is comparatively a tiny country about the size of the principality of Wales, a country much of which is rock, much of which is desert, and in which there are settled also already more than 1,000,000 Arabs. I entirely agree with the hon. gentleman that this Jewish entry has been of benefit to the Arab population as a whole. I do not need to labour that point. I have done so in previous debates. It is true, for instance, that the wealth which the Jews have brought in and the revenue which they have provided the Government have enabled us to give to the Arab people a standard of administration and education and health services such as they have never known under any previous régime. The central fact of these twenty years is that under the powerful guidance and protection of Great Britain more than 350,000 Jews have found happy settlement in a National Home in Palestine.

* * * * * *

Then what about the proposal that there shall be other areas where, for the time being at any rate, there will be a prohibition of transfers of land from Arabs to Jews? What are the reasons for that proposal? It has been suggested [illegible] Jewish Agency against these Land Regulations which was a statement by one party to the dispute made with a dignity which all of us must respect. I do not agree with everything which was said in that protest. They said that the new regulations were a concession to Arab political claims and not a measure for the protection of Arab cultivators. That is not true. If we were concerned with making concessions to Arab political claims for the sake of making concessions to those claims, we should have gone very much further than we have gone. We should have discussed other questions, and we should have done very differently from what we have done about immigration. We should have done very differently [illegible]

As regards this land problem, what was the Arab demand? It was that there [illegible] from the Arabs to the Jews, permanently and for all time. These regulations are very far from meeting that political demand of the Arabs in Palestine. Our whole problem in Palestine is to hold the scales evenly and fairly between the Jewish claims and the Arab claims. We have to do justice to each community under the mandate according to the instructions written into the mandate. It is not an easy task, it is an extremely difficult one. It is difficult to encourage close settlement of the Jews on the land, to be certain that, in all cases, it is without prejudice to the rights and position of the Arab population. The sole and simple reason why we are introducing these Land Regulations [illegible] of years, a series of impartial and authoritative commissions have told us that unless we introduced control of land settlement in the near future, we should be allowing a state of affairs to grow up in Palestine in which the rights and position of the Arab population would be jeopardised.

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It is asked: Is it really necessary to introduce this legislation in Palestine at the present critical moment? People are saying that the blanket of comparative peace has descended upon Palestine, that strife and violence have been reduced, at last, within narrow limits, that both the Jewish and the Arab communities appear to accept the present position, that they are even showing a new disposition to co-operate together, and that certainly both are disposed to [illegible] with His Majesty's Government [illegible] the war. Why, it is asked, interrupt that happy state of affairs by casting this controversial legislation upon the scene?

It is certainly true that a situation in Palestine which twelve months ago was exceedingly grave, which was fraught with [illegible] this country and to other people besides, has very greatly improved. In fact, Palestine is enjoying greater quietness than it has enjoyed for four years past, and the whole House is [illegible] greatly [illegible] It is [illegible] quite so grievous. He had hoped that a divided, quarrelling, warring, rebelling Palestine would be an

ally of his and an enemy of ours when it came to the greater struggle between Germany and Britain. He has been profoundly disappointed. I do not seek to deny for a moment the great effect which the outbreak of war has had in bringing about the greater pacification of Palestine. It has made a deep impression.

On the one side, the Arabs, who were struggling against our policy six months ago, have realised that, with the outbreak of war, a new issue has been raised which transcends their quarrel with the Jews and with the Palestine Administration. They have recognised that the Nazi domination of Europe would be a great threat to their own prospects of freedom and to the freedom of the Arab kingdoms in the rest of Arabia, and they have abated their hostility to us. They have expressed their complete friendship with us, and have offered their support to us in the prosecution of the war, which we are accepting in [illegible]. On the other side the Jews, six months ago, were engaged in a bitter campaign of hostility against our policy in Palestine. But the moment that war broke out their leaders also declared that a large issue had been raised, that Great Britain was at war with the cruel persecutors of Jewry in Central Europe, and, without qualifying in any way their criticism and hostility towards the white paper policy, they offered unconditionally their support to Great Br[illegible] to our war effort, an offer which we are accepting to the maximum practicable extent. There has been a *detente* in Palestine, and I would like, on behalf of the Government, to express our thanks to both the Jewish and the Arab communities in Palestine for their loyal friendship and support in our war against the common enemy, Nazi Germany.

Then why disturb that situation by introducing this controversial legislation? Hon. members assert that this will upset the comparative harmony which has been established. My reply is that, if we had not introduced these Land Regulations, that harmony would certainly have been disturbed before long, that these regulations are essential if, over a long period, this harmony is to be maintained. The improved situation in Palestine is not due entirely to the outbreak of war. [illegible] Britain declared war on Germany, but ten months ago, when the Government introduced their Statement of Policy on Palestine, Hon. members sitting opposite were afraid that that would not be the case. When that policy was [illegible] regard to the publication of these Land Regulations. They said that the result of the publication of the white paper policy would be to increase and deepen communal strife in Palestine and to usher in a period of bloodshed such as even that unhappy country had not known in recent years. That was not the result.

Slowly, conditions began to improve, and within two months of the publica[illegible] battalions of troops who had been engaged there and to station them elsewhere. Shortly after that the position had improved so much further that we could contemplate the withdrawal, if necessary, of a further three battalions of troops, and that was long before the war had started. Incidentally, of course, this matter of the possibility of withdrawing troops from Palestine is far more important to-day than it was ten months ago. The publication of the white paper is partly at any rate—and I think, largely—responsible for the improved situation in Palestine. The harmony has existed on the assumption that the white paper policy was to be carried out, and in that policy there were proposals with regard to Land Regulations.

Let me consider the immediate situation in Pa[illegible] It has been su[illegible] political truce, that they might have said that they would suspend [illegible] of the white paper [illegible] war and that [illegible] Land Regulations [illegible] of the Land Regulations had been defeated.

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I say I would justify these Land Regulations on two grounds. In the first place, by all the evidence of the series of inquiries they are essential if we are to carry out the mandate and, therefore, they are morally right. I do not think it weakens the argument for taking this action if it is held to be expedient politically now to do it. In the second place I would justify them because we are at a moment of supreme crisis and are engaged in a struggle for the defence [illegible] of the Jews from cruel and vile oppression.

What about the position of the League of Nations? It has a very important position in this matter, and we have never sought to deny that the Council of the League has a status in relation to the administration of the mandate in Palestine that we must respect and observe. Let me examine that position for a few moments. The hon. member opposite, and the right hon. baronet the member for Caithness (Sir A. Sinclair) have referred accurately to the findings of the Permanent Mandates Commission. There should be eleven members of the commission, and in June seven of them happened to meet. Of these, four found that the white paper policy was not in accordance with the mandate and [illegible] on the report of the Permanent Mandates Commission, but I will make only one [illegible] may remember—if they do not, I think it is worth while reminding them—that when the four members who took the majority view in this matter discussed in their report to the Council this land question, they laid great emphasis on the first part of article 6 of the mandate—that the administration of Palestine shall encourage in co-operation with the Jewish agency the close settlement by Jews on the land. But they never mentioned the other complementary part of the article which said we should do that while ensuring that the rights and position of other sections of the population are not prejudiced. So far as that report to the Council of the League is concerned, there was no indication that there were two complementary obligations under article 6 of the mandate. There was no sign that we had an obligation to the Arab section of the population in that country. I say, with all respect, that in view of that there is no reason why His Majesty's Government should feel shaken in their own view, and it is only their own view, I admit, that with regard to these Land Regulations they were acting in complete accordance with the whole terms of article 6.

Nevertheless, I do not deny that the Permanent Mandates Commission is an [illegible] It is an advisory body of the Council of the League, and the body that matters is the Council of the League of Nations. The opinion that matters is the opinion of members of the Council of the League, and we have never sought to deny that. We have never set ourselves up as judges in an issue in which we are one of the parties, we have always recognised that we must get the authority of the Council of the League for the policy which we pursued in Palestine.

I think we are entitled to say this—and I hope I will not be misunderstood if I say it, but the point should be made: If we have an obligation to the Council of the League, I think members of the Council also have an obligation to the mandatory Power. We are responsible for government in Palestine. They are not. We have the practical task of administering the most difficult mandate in existence. Incidentally, if the revenues in Palestine fall short, it is the British taxpayer who has to make them up. If there is trouble in Pal[illegible] soldiers, policemen, and civil administrators who are shot [illegible] these considerations, we have the practical job of governing that country day in and day out, month in and month [illegible] have the most intimate knowledge of what policy is required in order to maintain order, progress, and good government in that country. Although I absolutely agree that the last word in this matter must rest with the Council of the League of Nations, I think it is incumbent on members of the Council, in view of that fact, to pay some heed to our judgment in this matter and give us some discretion in carrying out the difficult mandate placed [illegible] of the Council who would like to cramp us by any refusal to acknowledge that general principle of political administration.

What ought we to have done in this case as regards the Council of the League? We have not any obligation at all to submit to the League, for their prior approval, any administrative action to be taken. On the contrary and normally, indeed, the inevitable practice is that we take our administrative action

and then the Council considers it and makes whatever comments it wishes on that action afterwards. But I agree with the right hon. baronet that in this case the situation is affected, is even altered, by the fact that the Permanent Mandates Commission had expressed a certain opinion with regard to the white paper policy. The right hon. baronet suggested that the proper course for us to follow was to publish these Land Regulations in draft and hold them in suspense until the Council of the League had had an opportunity of pronouncing upon them. I admit, as I did in the House last week, that for many reasons we would have preferred that procedure, but, as I say, we were responsible for administration in Palestine, and there are certain practical considerations in the delicate situation which exists there at the present time which made us reject that proposal and adopt an alternative course.

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[illegible] agree to [illegible] Derby and [illegible] opened so that some at any rate of these people may escape from a vile oppression and tribulation and settle happily in Palestine. [illegible] bution towards the solution of the problem of the Jewish refugees. For instance, under the Government's policy we have made provision in the current twelve months for more than 20,000 Jews going into Palestine and settling there. The hon. member for Derby said it was something like the fourth highest figure of immigration into Palestine. Most of these people have arrived in Palestine, about half of them legally, on legal certificates, and half of them illegally. They have taken the place of legal immigrants who otherwise would have been allowed.

Let me give another instance. On the day war broke out there were several [illegible] Suddenly they found themselves stranded in the land of their persecution. We made arrangements to get them out. We sent special officers from the administra- [illegible] of them are now settled in the Jewish National Home in Palestine. I do not think the House is going to be easily misled in this matter. I notice that in some high Jewish quarters it has been said that these Land Regulations turn the Jewish National Home into another ghetto, that they establish a situation which is similar to that of the Jews in the worst days of Tsarist Russia, similar even to that of the Jews in Nazi Germany to-day. I can understand a great deal of their bitterness. I know the firm faith and idealism of the Zionist Jews, but I say that it is a weak case which has to indulge in slanderous misrepresentation.

Under the benevolent and powerful protection of Great Britain, the Jewish National Home has been established in Palestine. It will stay there, it will grow, it will prosper. In the protest which they issued the other day the Jewish Agency [illegible] Arabs in Palestine who have rights equal to the rights of the Jews in Palestine. We are going to protect those rights as well as we protect the rights of the Jews. [illegible] prosper. It will raise for itself a host of enemies in the Middle East who will [illegible]rry and trouble it until in the end they may even overthrow it and destroy it. There can be peace and progress in Palestine only on the basis of a mutual recognition of the rights of the two communities inhabiting that country. It is [illegible] House to reject the motion of censure which has been moved.

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The Attorney-General (Sir Donald Somervell): Before I come to the wider issues which have been raised, I would like to remind the House exactly where we are in this matter, so far as this House is concerned. This House, in the summer of last year, approved the white paper policy. Part of that policy was,

undoubtedly, in the view of the indigenous population of Palestine—the Arabs—an important part of their policy. I would like to read a sentence which appears in the white paper:—

> "In these circumstances the High Commissioner will be given general powers to prohibit and regulate transfers of land. These powers will date from the publication of this statement of policy and the High Commissioner will retain them throughout the transitional period."

That is a pledge to the Arabs approved by this House, and I understand right hon. and hon. gentlemen opposite suggest that in the conflict on which we are now engaged we should repudiate that claim. The right hon. and gallant [illegible] the importance of our keeping our word, and that is exactly what His Majesty's Government are doing. And not only Arabs in Palestine, but Arabs throughout the world are waiting to see whether that particular pledge, which has been approved by this House, will be kept or not.

* * * * * *

I pass now to the main point made by the right hon. and learned gentleman and also by other hon. members, that legislation of this kind is illegal and contrary to the mandate. The right hon. and learned gentleman appealed to three articles of the mandate—articles 2, 6 and 15. Article 2 is a very important article. For one thing, it says that the mandatory Power, in carrying out the mandate, is to have regard to political considerations. Article 15 is an important article and it deals undoubtedly with discrimination, though primarily with such matters as rights of worship. But article 6 is the article which deals expressly and particularly with land, and it is the article which the mandatory Power must look at in seeing what are the instructions in the mandate with regard to land policy. In that article 6 deals particularly with land, clearly, on ordinary principles of construction familiar to everybody, it overrides, if there is any conflict, general principles which occur in other articles.

Article 6, as the House knows, contains two obligations. The Permanent Mandates Commission, the Council, and successive Governments have always recognised that each of the dual obligations contained in the mandate are one as sacred as the other. Immigration is to be facilitated, settlement is to be encouraged, but the rights and position of other sections of the population are not to be prejudiced. Now I just do not understand how we can carry out those two obligations without administration, and if necessary legislation, which discriminates between the two communities to each of which we are put under an obligation. How can we possibly facilitate immigration and settlement of Jews without saying, "Is this man a Jew?" How can we safeguard the rights and position of the other sections of the population without saying, "Are we dealing here with Jews or with other sections of the population?" It [illegible] my comprehension how anybody can sing [illegible] refers to Jews or whether it refers to [illegible] mandate when the mandate, in the article dealing with land, says that we are [illegible] as one community is concerned [illegible] is concerned.

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Now let me say a word about the position of the League. The opening obligation under article 22 of the Covenant is that the mandatory Power should submit an annual report to the League. I think that those who drew up the Covenant and mandate had a greater sense of reality than was clear in some of the [illegible] drew up the Covenant realised, of course, that the mandatory Power which has the responsibility for governing the territory must be free to govern it. It must be free to take action when in its view the necessity for action arises, and it provides that there should be an annual report, and naturally when that annual report comes up there is scope for discussion as to the policy being pursued. But the idea that under the Covenant a mandatory Power has to get approval for what it proposes to do to deal with matters which may be urgent, is utterly untrue. Of course, not under any obligation but as a matter of courtesy and proper conduct whenever there has been a Royal Commission or important statement of policy in regard to Palestine, or any other mandated territory, it has always been sent to the Council

of the League as being the proper thing to do. So that if one of the members of the Council feels it raises so serious an issue and he thinks that the Council ought to be assembled at once, he can take action.

So far as the obligations under the mandate and Covenant are concerned, there is nothing except to make an annual report, and as far as any obligation under international law is concerned, there would be no breach if the white paper and everything that was done last year had been left to the annual report [illegible] statement of policy. It was under that practice that the white paper was sent to the League last May. When the Permanent Mandates Commission sat it naturally came before them, and my right hon. friend appeared before them.

The report of the commission has been referred to several times in the debate. I hope that those who referred to it have also studied the comments made by His Majesty's Government on it. There are two points of importance. One is that two if not three members out of the four clearly regarded the Permanent Mandates Commission as not concerned with political considerations. With great respect to the commission I think they were wrong and that it is [illegible] that the mandatory shall be responsible for placing the country under such political conditions as will secure the establishment of the Jewish National Home. If His Majesty's Government neglected the necessary political considerations for the establishment of the Jewish National Home, they would be breaking or disregarding an important provision in the mandate. Two of the members said [illegible] were matters for the mandatory Power and the Council. My hon. friend the member for Walsall (Sir G. Schuster) has already quoted one member of the Mandates Commission who took that view. I do not blame the commission, I am not saying there is anything wrong in it, but I am saying that a situation has [illegible] the white paper policy. I have never heard anyone suggest what words he [illegible] by people who realised that in imposing this dual obligation all sorts of unanticipated difficulties and considerations would arise. They therefore drafted it in the vaguest and widest terms. It is full of phrases about "the position of the indigenous population," "the civil rights of the existing population," "suitable conditions," and so on. I am bound to say that I have tried to address my mind to what words anybody could insert to give a wider discretion to the mandatory Power to deal with this matter having regard to all the circumstances, and I have been unable to find words. In these circumstances four members of [illegible] minutes of a meeting that they did not at the time consider would be final, two or three considerations of what was the right course to pursue.

[illegible] which I think has a great deal of force in it. He said the Government ought not only [illegible] carried through. Being satisfied as we are that this is the right policy—and events have supported that view—being satisfied that it would bring better conditions to Palestine, being satisfied that it was completely within the mandate, what was the right course? Was it to wait? Delay and uncertainty would have been fixed on at once as evidence that we were not going through with it. The right course and the course we did pursue was to go ahead, to notify [illegible] done, these regulations to the Council, to be ready, as we were bound to be, if any member of the Council desired to have this matter discussed, to go and discuss it, but not to take any step ourselves which would be interpreted at once as throwing doubt on our certainty and conviction that [illegible] policy and a policy to be seen through. When the House realises that in this matter we have kept the Council informed at every stage and that [illegible] member of the Council has demanded that this matter should be discussed, we were ready to go and discuss it, surely, when the hon. member for Derby (Mr. Noel Baker) suggests that this is a unilateral breach of an agreement, the only conclusion to which one can come is that he is intoxicated with controversial exuberance. We believe in this policy.

We have reported to the Council—it is our only obligation—and we have reported before we need have done. If any member of the Council has any doubt about our action and wishes to discuss it we are ready to go and discuss it. In the meantime, believing we are right, we are not going to take steps which would throw doubt on our sincerity. We are just as sincere as are our critics.

Before I conclude may I say one or two general words perhaps of a less controversial nature. The conflict that exists in Palestine is a conflict between two ideals. The Jew wants to get back to the land which is associated with the history and greatness of his race. Everybody will sympathise with that. But the Arabs have a great history as well as the Jews and the indigenous population who have lived on the land for generations look with apprehension on the intruder on their ancient home.

They are apprehensive that these other people, coming from overseas with great wealth behind them, more experience, greater technical skill, will flood the civilisation and the culture which they hold dear and in which they believe. Everybody must sympathise with both those ideals and those two races, sprung in old days from a common stock, who have met in this land where one of them first appeared 3,000 years ago or thereabouts, and the other at any rate over 1,000 years ago. They have met in that land, and it is this country which has the great and difficult responsibility of trying to make this National Home a real success in circumstances in which, ultimately, Palestine can take its place as an autonomous nation among the nations of the world. No one will underrate the difficulty of that task, neither Jew nor Arab will underrate it.

All I want to say before I sit down is that my right hon. friend in particular, [illegible] everybody in this House knows [illegible] all honour to him and his sympathy with both sides to seeking a policy which would be fair, which politically would re-establish those conditions in which alone the National Home can be a success and which would carry out the particular obligations and the dual duties laid upon us by the mandate. It is not because we are afraid of the Arabs, it is not because we feel that in present circumstances we can disregard the Jews, that we ask the House to vote against this motion. It is because, after the most careful examination, we believe that this policy is fair to both sides, has the best hope of establishing conditions in which the National Home can take its place in the country associated with the past history of the Jews, that we ask the House to support us in this division and to vote against the vote of censure which has been moved.

E 1295 257 31 | No. 206

Note from the Italian Embassy. (*Received March* 14.)

[illegible] have been started by the section of the Ethiopian [illegible] Jerusalem hostile to the Italian Government. It appears that these actions will be brought before the Jerusalem Courts in the following order:—

1. In order to have the building of the ex Ethiopian Consulate declared a pious foundation.
2. In order to obtain cancellation in the register of land. This registration was effected in 1932 by the ex-Negus in the name of the Ethiopian Government.
3. In order that an apartment of twelve rooms be granted, in the building of the ex-Ethiopian Consulate to an ex Ethiopian princess.

Given the above order in which the actions are to be presented, should the first be successful, *i.e.*, recognition of the ex Ethiopian Consulate as a pious foundation, it would constitute a basis which would facilitate a solution of the second question in favour of the [illegible] rejection of their second action, and, as a consequence, the acceptance of the request of the representatives of the Italian Government.

[illegible] whereas the Italian request for the transfer of the building to [illegible] Italian Government [illegible]

It would appear, therefore, desirable that either the legal action started by the representative of the Italian Government (notice of which was given nine months ago) should be heard first of all or that all legal actions should be suspended

Italian Embassy London,
March 14, 1940

E 1327 50 31] No. 267

Mr Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax (Received April 8)

(No 62)
(Telegraphic) *Jedda April 8, 1940*

MY telegram No. 35 of 28th February, 1940.

Ibn Saud has asked me to convey to His Majesty's Government his appreciation of the policy recently adopted in Palestine. He has learnt that the situation has very considerably improved and is confident that it will shortly be entirely normal

2. There is, however one inconsistency in this connexion, which is causing him and the Iraqi Government concern, namely, the presence in Iraq of a great number of destitute Palestinians. These persons are begging alms on the plea that they have had to leave their own country where the Government have not made it possible for them to earn a living. Their presence in Iraq in a destitute condition is bad for British prestige and an excuse for enemy propaganda. Nuri Pasha discussed this question with Ibn Saud at the instance of the [? Chargé d'Affaires] at Riyadh, and suggested that the Arab States, including Egypt, should get together and collect a fund for the relief of distressed Palestinians. Ibn Saud, though he would prefer to leave the matter for settlement by His Majesty's Government and Palestine authorities, feels that he would have to join in any such scheme

3. His reason for informing me privately was that he wished His Majest Government to know that the scheme was afoot. He emphasised in his message [illegible] if the British authorities solved the problem without the intervention of the Arab States

4. I gathered from the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs that Sheikh Hafiz W[illegible]

(Repeated to Bagdad, No. 26, Cairo, No 25 and for Middle East Intelligence Centre, No. 22)

E 1684 50 31] No. 268

Sir M Lampson to Viscount Halifax—(Received April 14)

(No. 222
(Telegraphic) *Cairo, April 14, 1940*

JEDDA telegram No 62 to Foreign Office

According to Prime Minister Hafez Wahba, on behalf of both Saudi Arabian and Iraqi Governments, had asked Egyptian Government to associate itself with the other two Governments in a friendly communication to us regarding the Palestine question

2. Communication would express appreciation of the three Governments of our recent communications (see *e.g.*, your telegram No 854 to me) made to them regarding the return of exiles, and would suggest as a measure of appeasement that a general amnesty should be granted, subject possibly to a few stated exceptions, and that any persons already in Palestine apprehended for old offences should be tried by civil court instead of military courts, it being understood that all new crimes would be tried by military courts. The three Governments would strongly deprecate criminality and therefore suggest the last provision in order to discourage crimes in future

3. The three Governments would propose to exclude Yemen from communication because they are not sure of Yemen's discretion and its possible relations with Ita.

4. [illegible] told Oriental Secretary that the question was going to be considered in Council of Ministers on 15th April as he wished to give an answer to Hafiz Wahba before the latter's departure on 17th April. Prime Minister thought that the proposed communication was a good idea. It would be framed to show friendly attitude of the Arabs towards Great Britain, and with the idea of helping us in the present war situation

5. Hafez Wahba subsequently called on me and explained that the Prime Minister had misunderstood him. He had suggested only conversations with us on the above lines with a view to provoking initiative from us on ide[illegible] [? suggestion]. Hafez Wahba told me he would put the Prime Minister [illegible] and that we need make no communication to him meanwhile

(Repeated to Bagdad, Jerusalem, Jedda)

E 1742 50 31] No 269

Sir M Lampson to Viscount Halifax—(Received April 18)

(No 242)
(Telegraphic) *Cairo, April 18, 1940*

HAFEZ Wahba saw Ali Maher on 16th April and explained to him that his idea had been that the three Governments should enter into friendly conversations with His Majesty's Government with a view to provoking from them measures of conciliation on lines indicated in second paragraph of my telegram No 222

2. Hafez Wahba told oriental secretary that Ali Maher had agreed and that the idea now was that conversations should be entered into in London, Cairo, Bagdad and Jedda

3. So far the Prime Minister has said nothing further to me, and I shall of course, leave all initiative to him

(Repeated to Bagdad, No. 15, Jerusalem, No 22, Jedda, No. 10)

E 1753 50 31] No. 270

Palestinian Exiles

THE Saudi Arabian Minister came to see me this morning on his return from a long visit to Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Egypt and spoke to me with much earnestness about the situation of those Palestinians who were now living outside Palestine—mainly in Iraq—as the result of the recent trouble.

2. Sheikh Hafiz Wahba said that there were about 400 of these refugees in Iraq and some seventeen in Saudi Arabia, and their mere presence was most detrimental to the British cause in those countries. They constituted a focus for [illegible] British propaganda and sentiment. They were more—they were a focus for ill feeling against those Arabs who, like Ibn Saud remained friendly to Great Britain. He himself, for instance, had been insulted by an Iraqi schoolmaster in a hotel in Bagdad and told that Ibn Saud was an Englishman wearing Arab dress

3. The question of these exiles was closely bound up with the trials which were still taking place in Palestine. The Arabs found it difficult to understand why, now that the rebellion had ceased, the British authorities should be so vindictive, and should, in particular, be prosecuting and convicting members of the Arab race for no worse a crime than carrying arms. It might have been necessary to mete out serious punishment for this offence while the rebellion lasted [illegible] The [illegible] were [illegible] consequently swelling the ranks of the exiles in Iraq. Some fifteen for instance, had arrived there from Palestine the week after he himself had left. It seemed to him speaking with all seriousness as a friend of Great Britain, that in the matter of these prosecutions we were making a serious error of policy, and one which was undoing all the good which had been derived from the land transfers regulations and the subsequent debate in Parliament.

4. I told Sheikh Hafiz Wahba in reply that there was nothing vindictive about the British attitude. It was not true that Arabs were now being executed for minor crimes, even though the nominal charge might in some cases be carrying arms; they were not, in fact, sentenced to death unless some far more serious charge had also to be laid at their door. Nor was it merely a question of convicting men who had killed others in hot blood or fair fight. Many were cases [illegible] Arabs. Nor, again, had anyone (as he had said some Arabs thought) been investigated back to Palestine. All the Palestine Administration had ever said was that all were free to return who were not actually guilty of crime. No one could, presumably, have committed a crime without knowing it, and this being so, there was no excuse for anyone to say that he had been misled. The fact [illegible] tions were taking place was due to the fact that evidence was [illegible] forthcoming from persons, including A[illegible] terrorised.

5. After considerable discussion, Sheikh Hafiz Wahba said that he had two practical suggestions to make:

(a) That military courts should now be replaced by the civil courts.
(b) That the Palestine Administration should be given the names of the exiles now in Iraq and asked to say which of those were wanted for serious crimes and which could be allowed to return.

6. As regards (a), no Arab could ever be convinced that a military court was as fair as a civil court. It made no difference whether the court were composed of British officers, Turkish officers, or any other nation's officers. In his own case this conviction was reinforced by what he remembered of the British military courts in Egypt after the last war. In the years 1921, 1922 and 1923 various men had been sentenced to death by these courts and subsequently [illegible] their supposed crimes, and had been subsequently discovered – as a result of the investigations following on Sir Lee Stack's murder in 1925 – to have been obviously innocent. Moreover, the Arabs had been impressed by what seemed to them the much lighter sentences passed on Jews for the same offences. I told the Minister that, so far as the courts in Palestine were concerned, there could be no doubt about the fairness and impartiality of the military tribunals. I was sure that, if actual cases were investigated, the sentences passed on Jews and Arabs would be found to be the same for all offences where the circumstances were really and not merely superficially the same. Moreover, no man was convicted unless there were evidence to support the conviction. It made no difference from this [illegible] on this subject would convince him. I said, however, that I would report what he had said in the proper quarter and see what prospects there were of restoring civil jurisdiction.

7. As regards (b), too, I said I would enquire whether anything could be done.

8. Sheikh Hafiz Wahba also said that the Arab States would only be too glad to assist in the final restoration of peace and order in Palestine, by appeals to the population, for instance, to refrain from those acts of sabotage and banditry which were still continuing spasmodically. They could probably do so with success if, but only if, His Majesty's Government could make some concession in the matter of prosecutions. I did not encourage him to pursue this line of thought.

L. BAGGALLAY

April 19, 1940

E 1986 257 31] No. 271

Memorandum respecting Disputes over the Ethiopian Convents and Consular Properties in Jerusalem

SIGNOR FRACASSI, the counsellor of the Italian Embassy, called here this morning in connexion with the disputes over the Ethiopian convents and properties in Jerusalem.

2. [illegible] lled I had made certain enquiries and [illegible] Italian Consul had, in fact, instituted actions in respect [illegible] I was endeavouring to obtain further informa[illegible] ld would let him hear in due course.

3. Signor Fracassi then said that, if I would allow him to speak frankly, the situation over these convents was getting exceedingly difficult. For months now his predecessor, Signor Crolla, and he himself had been telling the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs that the Foreign Office had assured them that [illegible] ther His Majesty's Government nor the Palestine Administration were in any way prejudiced against the Italian Government in this matter. Yet nothing happened, and now, when nearly three years had elapsed since the recognition of the Italian Empire, this simple question of handing over the Italian Consulate in Jerusalem (to say nothing of the other properties) was still unsettled. He quite understood the difficulties of His Majesty's Government, but, all the same, the matter presented itself to the authorities at Rome as one of quite inexplicable obstruction or lack of authority on the part of the authorities in London. He could not go on saying that the authorities here were full of goodwill. The Government at Rome would certainly not believe him.

4. I said that I would naturally report what he had said to me, but I must make it clear that I had never said, either to Signor Crolla or to him, that His Majesty's Government or the Palestine Administration were able to interfere on behalf of the Italian Government or intended to do so. What I had always said was that it was a mistake to suppose that the authorities, either here or in Palestine, had any bias whatever against the Italian Government in this matter or were making matters any more difficult for the Italian Consul General than they were already. On the contrary, they would be only too glad if a satisfactory solution could be found. What they could not do was to interfere with the course of the law. Their difficulties in this connexion must be accepted as a fact. If the Administration attempted to overrule the law by administrative action, the only result would be appeals to the Privy Council and questions in Parli[illegible] would lead to the resurrection of the pro-Ethiopian elements in this [illegible] to a press campaign, with the result that all the feeling over the [illegible] question, which was now dying away, would be revived.

5. As regards the actions, I saw no prospect at pre[illegible] their course. I would [illegible] anything could be done to hasten the hearings.

6. [illegible] developing, and asked that, when I could, I would send him a letter explaining the difficulties in the way of taking administrative action.

L. BAGGALLAY

April 27, 1940

E 1991 50 31] No. 272

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received April 29.)

(No. 134.)
(Telegraphic.)

Baghdad, April 29, 1940

CAIRO telegram No. 242.

Minister for Foreign Affairs told me for first time on 27th April of plan [? developed] during his visit to Ibn Saud that Egypt, Iraq and Saudi Arabia should enter into friendly conversations with His Majesty's Government with a view to [? scrutinising] means of appeasement in Palestine. He no doubt had in mind those mentioned in paragraph 2 of Cairo telegram No. 222, and he explained further that, when Hafez Wahba sounded the Prime Minister of Egypt, latter had promised that Egyptian Minister in London should act on behalf of [? all] three Governments in this matter, and that, without waiting concurrence of Iraqi Government, he had now sent instructions to Egyptian Ambassador to act accordingly.

Ibn Saud professed to be disconcerted by this development and said that so far he had only authorised Iraqi Chargé d'Affaires to keep in touch with Egyptian Ambassador.

(Repeated to Jerusalem, No. 21, and Jedda, No. 13.)

E 1952 50 31 No 273

Hassan Nashat to Mr Butler.—(Received May 3.)

(Personal and Private.) *75 South Audley Street,*

DEAR [illegible]

REFERRING to the interview I had with you on the 25th April and to the conversation we had on the telephone this morning, I beg to inform you that his Excellency Aly Maher Pasha has been approached by the Iraqi and Saudi Arabian Governments to present in common to the British Government their sincere thanks for all that has been achieved up till now as regards the exiled [illegible] British Government, Maher Pasha desires me to put forward the common request that a prompt and decisive step be taken in this matter which would be greatly welcomed, and which would certainly bring about the establishment of peace in Palestine.

In his view, this decisive step should take the form of a general amnesty permitting the return of the exiled Palestinians who could be brought before the civil courts for any crimes already committed by them. As to the crimes which may be committed in the future, they could be judged by the military courts.

As I told you, I have been asked by Maher Pasha to see Lord Halifax and communicate to him what I have just mentioned in this letter. I intend to ask to see Lord Halifax shortly, and I would be very glad to hear from you personally before the proposed meeting.

In making this intervention, I am also interpreting the views of the Iraqi [illegible] Saudi Arabian Governments, who express the desire to join with [illegible]

The despatch I received from Maher Pasha did not contain the [illegible] the exiled Palestinians. The number I quoted at our meeting on the 25th April was gathered by me from a talk I had with my Saudi Arabian colleague on the subject. The despatch also made no distinction as regards all the exiled, and I am writing to-day to Cairo to secure the necessary information as to the exact number.

Believe me,
Yours sincerely,
HASSAN NASHAT.

E 2050 332 31 No 274

Documents concerning the Palestine Immigration Quota for the six monthly period commencing April 1, 1940.—(Received May 24.)

(1)

Immigration Ordinance.

Order by the High Commissioner.

IN virtue of the power conferred on the High Commissioner by section 5 A of the Immigration Ordinance, his Excellency is pleased to order and it is hereby ordered as follows:—

The maximum aggregate number of immigration certificates in all categories that may be granted during the period from the 1st April, 1940, to the 31st May, 1940, shall be as follows:—

2,050,

and such additional certificates in category D as shall suffice for the admission as immigrants of wives and children under the age of eighteen years completed of immigrants arriving during the period and of immigrants who arrived before the beginning of the period.

By his Excellency's Command,

J. S. MACPHERSON,
Chief Secretary.

April 1940

2.

Explanatory Note.

1. *General.*

The quota prescribed in the order given above provides for the grant during April and May 1940 of immigration certificates to 2,050 persons together with their wives and minor children, and, in suitable circumstances, wives and children of residents of Palestine who settled in the country in advance of their families.

Of these certificates 100 are for Arabs and other persons, and 1,950 are for Jews.

None of these certificates will be made available for persons resident in territory occupied by His Majesty's enemies; they are available for persons who have been resident in allied and neutral countries before the outbreak of war, the [illegible] They may also be made available for former residents of that part of Poland now occupied by the enemy, who have entered allied or neutral countries before the 1st October, 1939.

The number of wives and children of prospective immigrants and of residents of Palestine cannot be precisely determined before their arrival, but the [illegible] for principal immigrants in the order means that, so far as can be [illegible] approximately 3,000 Jewish immigrants will be admitted to Palestine on certificates granted during April and May.

2. *Relation of Quota to Policy.*

It will be recalled that in May 1939, His Majesty's Government declared their policy in regard to Jewish immigration into Palestine in the following terms:—

> "For each of the next five years a quota of 10,000 Jewish immigrants will be allowed, on the understanding that shortage in any one year may be added to the quotas for subsequent years, within the five years' period, if economic absorptive capacity permits.
>
> "In addition, as a contribution towards the solution of the Jewish refugee problem, 25,000 refugees will be admitted as soon as the High Commissioner is satisfied that adequate provision for their maintenance is ensured, special consideration being given to refugee children and dependants.
>
> "His Majesty's Government are determined to check illegal immigration, and further preventive measures are being adopted. The numbers of any Jewish illegal immigrants who, despite these measures, may succeed in coming into the country and cannot be deported will be deducted from the yearly quotas."

In the execution of that policy for the six months April 1940 to September 1940 the High Commissioner has decided that approximately 9,000 Jewish immigrants may be admitted to Palestine on authorities granted during these six months, namely, 5,000 against the annual quota of 10,000, and about 4,000 against the supplementary provision of 25,000 certificates for refugees. This figure of approximately 9,000, so far as can be foreseen, comprises about 5,800 certificates for principal immigrants, and about 3,200 certificates for wives and minor children.

If there had been no illegal immigration and if there were no prospect of further illegal immigration, a quota of 5,800 certificates and about 3,200 certificates for wives and minor children would have been prescribed for the six months April 1940–September 1940. But the volume of Jewish illegal immigration during the past twelve months has been considerable, and it has, therefore, been decided to prescribe a quota for April and May only which is one-third of the capacity for the half year, with the intention of prescribing a quota for June and July of the same dimensions less the number of illegal immigrants recorded during the months of April and May [illegible] prescribing a third quota for August and September less the number of illegal immigrants recorded during June and July.

The same process will be continued for the half-year beginning the 1st October, 1940.

3. *The Immigration Account for* [illegible] 40

The statements of the immigration account for the first year under the declared policy are given below —

Quota Account, April 1939 *March* 1940

A.—Certificates available at the 1st April, 1939 —
  (*a*) 10,000 annual quota
  (*b*) 25,000 supplementary refugee certificates in so far as maintenance was ensured

B —Certificates granted —
  (*a*) April 1939-September 1939 10,350, comprising 5,000 against the annual quota of 10,000, 5,350 against the refugee supplement of 25,000
  (*b*) October 1939 March 1940 · Nil, being 5,000 less 5,000 illegal immigrants against the annual quota of 10,000, and about 11,000 illegal immigrants against the refugee supplement of 25,000

C —Arrivals recorded
  (*a*) Lawfully registered Jewish immigrants, 1st April, 1939 28th March, 1940 10,529
  (*b*) Immigrants unlawfully arriving and or remaining in Palestine 1st April, 1939 29th February, 1940 15,489
  (*c*) The total number of immigrants recorded to date is therefore 26,018
  (*d*) This number provides the 10,000 certificates in the annual quota for 1939-40, and 16,018 certificates in the supplement of 25,000 certificates for refugees, leaving a balance of 8,982 supplementary certificates for refugees

D —There remain, therefore, 40,000 immigration certificates, 10,000 a year from the 1st April, 1940, and rather fewer than 9,000 supplementary certificates for refugees for lawful Jewish immigration under the declared policy subject to such deductions from each quota declared in the future as are equal to the numbers of illegal immigrants who may arrive in the future

4 *Distribution of Certificates, April May* 1940

The following arrangements of general character will be made in the distribution of the certificates prescribed by the order for April May —

  (i) *Category A* —About 600 certificates will be available for principal immigrants together with the number of certificates necessary for the admission of wives and children Apart from a small departmental reserve these certificates will be sent to His Majesty's passport control officers and consuls for issue to applicants in order of date of applications
  (ii) *Category B* (*ii*) —About 30 certificates will be available for rabbis and other persons of religious occupation together with the number of certificates necessary for the admission of wives and minor children The Chief Rabbinate, communities and congregations may make application for the grant of these certificates in the usual manner on the statutory forms obtainable at the offices of the department
  (iii) *Category B* (*iii*) — About 1,000 certificates may be granted for students, youths and children on the production by local institutions of the proper guarantees as to support and maintenance
  (iv) *Category C* —About 60 certificates will be placed at the disposal of the executive of the Jewish Agency together with certificates for wives and minor children
  (v) *Category D* —About 200 certificates will be available for parents of residents in Palestine, provided that the parents were living in neutral or allied countries before the outbreak of war Under the same conditions 30 certificates will be available for fiancées. No applications will be accepted at present and the outstanding applications [illegible] the department will be taken in the serial order of date of [illegible]

[E 1986 257 31] No 275

Mr Baggallay to Signor Fracassi

Dear Fracassi, *Foreign Office, May* 27 1940

I HAVE been thinking over our conversation of a few days ago about the Ethiopian Consulate and convents in Palestine, and it may be useful if I put before you in writing some of the considerations which affect our attitude to this question

2. I gather that the Italian Government cannot understand why, seeing that two years and more have now passed since the United Kingdom recognised the King of Italy as the *de jure* Emperor of Ethiopia His Majesty's Government should still be unwilling or unable to place the Italian consular officers in Palestine in actual physical possession of former property of the Ethiopian State, like the Ethiopian Consulate in Jerusalem, or recognise appointments made by the present Administration in Italian East Africa to posts, like that of Superior of the Ethiopian Convents, to which appointments were formerly made by the Emperor of Ethiopia

[illegible] own houses (or at any rate [illegible] These persons apparently dispute the right of the Italian Government to the possession of the consulate even as successors to the former Ethiopian Government, which was not, they say, its real owner (you will remember that it forms part of the convent building) But even if there were [illegible] to eject the persons in question by administrative action, *e g*, by sending police to arrest them or throw them into the street In such a case the law of Palestine requires the person who claims that someone else is in wrongful possession of property which is really his to apply to the courts of law and secure an ejectment order, which can, if necessary, be enforced by the police. It is the same principle which prevents me from walking up to someone in the street and taking from him by force a watch which I see him wearing and which I know he has stolen from me. I have to call a policeman and prove to a magistrate that the watch is really mine, and not his.

4 The inability of the Palestine Administration to act in defiance of the procedure which the law requires must, I fear, be accepted as a fact If the [illegible] present occupiers of the consulate to the courts of Palestine the Privy Council in this country and the Council of the League, questions in Parliament, a campaign in the press, and generally, a revival, with every kind of unfortunate consequence, of all the controversy and bitter feeling, now happily quiescent which surrounded the Ethiopian question two or three years ago. The total result would be to make it more and not less, difficult for the Italian Government to secure eventual possession

5. So far as His Majesty's Government and the Government of Palestine are concerned, the same considerations apply generally to any other property, such as the convent buildings, to which the Italian Government lays claim as successor to the former Ethiopian Government. But the legal grounds on which those now in occupation of this property deny the claim of the Italian Government may no doubt be different in different cases

6. As regards the new Superior, the position is that there is nothing in the law or custom of Palestine which requires the Government of Palestine to accord [illegible] doubt, "recognition" for what I may term social purposes is given as a matter of course. But all that "recognition" means in such cases is that as nobody else comes forward to dispute the right of the first man to call himself Superior the Government of Palestine treats him as the Superior for such purposes as invitations to social functions. In the present case, however, more than one

person calls himself "Superior." The dispute which arises from this fact is not one which the Government of Palestine is called upon to settle, and if it were to try to settle it by making some declaration or announcement which neither the law nor custom requires it to make, the results would be nearly the same as if it were to try to eject the present occupants from the consulate by administrative action. There might be no appeal to the courts, because there might be nothing about which to go to law. But the resultant publicity in this country, with its attendant evils, would be just the same.

7. I hope that this will make clear the attitude of His Majesty's Government and the Government of Palestine, about which I should be sorry if there were any misunderstanding. In the many talks on this subject I have had with Crolla and yourself, I have never had out any prospect that the authorities here or in Palestine could interfere with the course of the law. Certainly I have never intended to do so. What I have always said—and this remains as true as when I first said it—is that His Majesty's Government and the Government of Palestine have no bias whatever against the Italian Government over this question. They are, on the contrary, accused by Ethiopian sympathisers of having a bias on the side of the Italian Government. Actually, where it is a question of anything *sub judice*, they must be, and are, quite impartial. If, as I have said, they were in actual physical possession of any property belonging to the former Ethiopian State, they would hand it over without hesitation to the representatives of the Italian Government. They deeply regret the existence of these disputes and obstacles, and wish matters were otherwise. But matters being what they are, they must let the law take its course, even though they have, as you have urged, considered the question from a political and not merely from a narrow legalistic point of view.

8. So far as the law is concerned, it can be taken for granted that the courts know that the Government of Palestine, like His Majesty's Government, recognise the King of Italy as Emperor of Ethiopia. The recognition of a foreign ruler is a prerogative of the Crown and the courts of Palestine, like the courts in this country, have no choice but to accept it as a fact. At the same time, the courts are the judges of the consequences which flow from this recognition, and I would only add that in the particular case of the Ethiopian properties, the courts may have to decide not merely what consequences flow from the recognition of the King of Italy as Emperor of Ethiopia so far as former Ethiopian State property is concerned, but also whether any particular item of property was, in fact, State property, and possibly various other legal points as well.

9. I shall endeavour to obtain further information about the actions which have already been started in the courts. But such information as I have does not give any [illegible] actions which have been started on the Ethiopian side will prejudice in any way the original action begun by the Italian Consul General.

Yours sincerely,
LACY BAGGALLAY

[E 2096/50/31] No. 276.

Viscount Halifax to His Majesty's Representatives at Cairo (No. 458), Baghdad (No. 221) and Jedda (No. 60)

(Telegraphic.) R *Foreign Office, June 14, 1940*

FOLLOWING is text of identical letters from Mr. Butler to Egyptian and Saudi Arabian representatives:—

"Careful consideration has, as you know, been given to your Excellency's representations about the Palestinian exiles living in neighbouring Arab countries.

I am now glad to be able to confirm the information which has already been given to your Excellency concerning the intention of the Palestine Government to make certain amendments to the Palestine Defence Regulations. These amendments will take effect from 15th June and after that date the military courts in Palestine will have no power to try offences committed before it, nor will they have the power to impose death sentences in respect

of offences committed after it. This will, of course, be without prejudice to the powers of the civil courts under the ordinary law of the land. I must [illegible] Government may find it necessary to revoke the amendments now in co[illegible]

"I gather from what your Excellency has told me that these amendments [illegible] exiles to return to Palestine. His Majesty's Government are very pleased that this should be so, since they sincerely desire to do all they can to assist in restoration of normal conditions in Palestine."

(Repeated to Jerusalem, No. 484, and Beirut, No. 16 (for Damascus).)

E 2220/G] No. 277.

Viscount Halifax to Sir B. Newton (Baghdad)

(No. 290.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, July 10, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 193 (of 26th May), Part II. Public feeling in Iraq regarding Palestine and Syria.

You may inform Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs that His Majesty's Government [illegible] policy for Palestine as laid down in May 1939, and that it remains unchanged.

2. You should not volunteer any further information, but, if questioned regarding the implementation of that policy, you should point out that immigration and land sales are already being regulated in accordance with its provisions. As regards constitutional development, His Majesty's Government have not so far been able to regard peace and order as sufficiently restored for the first step [illegible] of the departments of the Administration. Nor do they think it likely that this step can be taken while the present war continues. But they hope and expect that, when the war is ended, conditions in Palestine will permit the various steps of constitutional development to follow upon one another in orderly succession on the lines already laid down. You must not go beyond this.

3. This authority applies generally to all similar enquiries which may be [illegible]

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 592, Jedda, No. 87, and Jerusalem, No. 579.)

[E 2394/167/31] No. 278.

Correspondence with the New Zionist Organisation about the Formation of a Jewish Army

(1)

Telegram from the President, New Zionist Organisation, London, to the Prime Minister, dated June 28, 1940

THE New Zionist Organisation, having developed and committed itself in [illegible] raised mainly in non-Empire countries to fight on side of Allies, feel opportunity should be afforded to representatives of New Zionist Organisation to meet Prime Minister for immediate and frank discussion in view his letter of the 24th May and in face of world wide favourable reaction from all quarters. New Zionist [illegible] Jewish Army [illegible] to meet Prime Minister are: Major William Schonfield, officer Jewish battalions last war; [illegible] New Zionist Organisation Executive. PRESIDENT, *New Zionist Organisation, 47 Finchley Road, N.W. 8.*

2

Letter to the President, New Zionist Organisation, London

Dear Sir, 10 *Downing Street July* 14. 1940

THE Prime Minister has asked me to acknowledge the receipt of your telegram and to inform you that he is grateful to the New Zionist Organisation for their offer to assist in recruitment, and notes that in its present form this is made unconditionally

Jews of any nationality are welcome at all times to enlist with the British army, and a considerable number of them have already done so. Moreover, in Palestine itself Jews are able to enlist in certain units of the British army and the Royal Air Force

His Majesty's Government hope that, when the need for additional man power arises and the necessary arrangements can be made for training and equipment there will be further opportunities for embodying in the British army Jews in any part of the world who may desire to offer their services. It is, however, essential that enlistment should be in the armed forces of the Crown and not in any separate or distinct military force subject to any external command or owning allegiance in any other quarter

Mr Churchill regrets that, in view of the many other pressing demands on his time, he is unable to discuss the matter personally with representatives of the organisation.

Yours &c
J M MARTIN

E 2283 2029 65] No 279

Sir M Lampson to Viscount Halifax—(Received July 14)

(No 718)
(Telegraphic) *Cairo, July* 13, 1940

As the situation in Middle East, although obscure, is obviously fraught with danger (and this must be my excuse for going beyond my own beat), I have discussed it with British military authorities with object of clarifying our views [illegible], if possible agreeing on some line of action which we could jointly recommend [illegible] His Majesty's Government

2. [illegible] authorities following elements in the situation which appeared to me of particular importance —

(a) A strong movement is on foot for some sort of confederation of independ[illegible] jordan and Palestine.

[illegible] Arabs for early achievement of Syrian independence and, owing to our own present difficulties and lack of military strength in Middle East, similar hopes are entertained more strongly than before as regards Palestine (see last paragraph of Bagdad telegram No 315).

[illegible] great strides and [illegible] is capable of [illegible] idea of independence. [illegible] necessity [illegible] Jews [illegible] Turks nor need she hesitate to create discord between Arab rulers, provided Middle East is set going against us.

(c) [illegible] whether we are to [illegible] against Arabs [illegible] we [illegible] hope to evade much longer. From angle of this post it seems eminently [illegible] without delay to propitiate Arabs in order to forestall our enemies

Military authorities held strongly that it is undesirable at present to [illegible] French [illegible] danger [illegible] if [illegible] possibly first if we accepted a policy too favourable to Arabs there French might turn against us. Concession to Arabs as regards Syria being thus ruled out for the moment it seemed to me that consideration should be given to question whether anything could be done as regards

Palestine where success might be achieved by further immediate implementation of white paper and promises of amnesty Military authorities favoured the former, but reserved their opinion regarding amnesty in view of possibility that it might increase chance of internal disturbance

4. Since these discussions I have received your Lordship's telegram No 592 which appears to rule out implementation of white paper during war While I am well aware of difficulty seen by Sir H MacMichael in further implementation (though I have never felt convinced that in our wider interest we should be deterred thereby from going ahead), I feel compelled to put before your Lordship following considerations in the hope that this decision may be reconsidered —

5. Trouble with Arabs in neighbouring countries is bound to affect our position in Egypt which is already none too strong or easy and which is not likely to improve unless we have some striking success. It seems to me a question of a balance of advantage, and while I am not unmindful of other impo[illegible] siderations involved, I feel it would be wise to do all we can to placate Arabs in time, even at a certain risk, rather than allow our enemies to exploit their disappointment and foment trouble among them. Lastly, may we not be forced to give way as regards full implementation of white paper later on with result that we shall reap no benefit therefrom?

(Repeated to Jerusalem, No 26, Saving, and Bagdad, No. 13, Saving)

E 2283 2029 65] No. 280

Telegram from High Commissioner, Palestine dated July 22, 1940 —(*Communicated by Colonial Office, Received July* 23)

MAY I be allowed to offer the following comments upon recent telegrams from Cairo to Foreign Office, particularly No. 718 (copy to me, Saving) and No. 720 (copy transmitted from London)?

1. There is a vast nucleus of variegated intrigue afoot throughout Arab [illegible] T[illegible] k of it as "a strong movement for some confederation of [illegible]pendent States" suggests a unity which is very far existing The idea of the confederation is by no means generally shared and the chief features exhibiting unity are, first, mutual distrust and, second, the unanimity of desire of each part [illegible] dream which would resolve itself into a nightmare, though they keep getting some promise or encouragement which might prove useful

2. The French collapse does not extend to their military strength in Syria [illegible] politicians in Syria and neighbouring countries promptly got their rods and out for muddy fishing

3. Most of the advances recorded seem to me to be less than a request for guidance, though naturally figuring as such, than soundings directed (a) to discovering our intentions, (b) to getting our support

4. Taking these views I feel doubtful whether such words as "appeasement" and "propitiation" and "placation" really carry in them the measure of balm assumed or whether the assumption that we are "evading" the question of "Arab aspirations" covers the true issue. The very considerable concessions [illegible] in respect of military courts and release of families were justified and I believe they were greatly appreciated, but it seems that they are also to serve as starting points for fresh demands The same fascism happens again, and I [illegible] tintans is likely to turn the politicians of Egypt, Syria and Iraq into likely allies or do more than convince them that we are on the run. The only thing that will achieve the end desired is success in the field of war which will open their eyes to the fact that our friendship is worth cultivating, and in the meantime consistent firmness, frankness and fairness in our dealing with them

(Addressed to Colonial Office, No. 692, Secret. Repeated to Cairo, No 428 Bagdad No 429 Beirut No 430, Angora No 431, and Jedda No 432)

E 2283/2029/65

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received August 4.)

No. 405.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, August 3, 1940*

ARAB policy.

Cairo telegram No. 718 and Jerusalem telegram No. 692.

While the Arabs can give us little positive help they have the power to make much trouble throughout the Middle East and are no doubt under considerable temptation to use this power if they cannot otherwise achieve progress with their national aims. I therefore agree with Sir M. Lampson that at this critical juncture it seems very desirable to explore all means of securing Arabic goodwill. Meanwhile I am deferring negative reply authorised in paragraph 1 of your telegram No. 290 until Iraqi Government again press for answer to their appeal.

2. From my experience in Iraq I also agree with criticism of Arab leaders expressed by Sir Harold MacMichael. As for reasons he gives negotiations with representatives of the Arab States Executive Committee are likely always to be futile. I deduce that a generally acceptable and conclusive solution of the Palestinian question could only be obtained from the Arab Higher Committee. As part of it the committee would presumably be required publicly to accept policy of May 1939 and to appeal to the Arabs of Palestine and other Arab countries for co-operation with His Majesty's Government.

3. To judge from their printed statement of the 30th May, 1939, minimum conditions of committee would include a fixed date (irrespective of Jewish co-operation) for establishment of an independent Government in Palestine. General Nuri Pasha in short continues to maintain that, instead of a fixed date for complete independence, they would be satisfied with the promise to set up within definite period, say one to two years, shadow Government (including a shadow king) which on Iraqi precedent would lead to complete independence within period which need not be fixed. It seems likely that other conditions would be the unpublished limitation of Jewish immigration, whether legal or illegal, to 75,000 from April 1939, the application of land regulations in accordance with Woodhead report and a general amnesty.

4. Short of comprehensive settlement, I would still suggest consideration of the following subsidiary measures, which, without giving full satisfaction, would help to placate the reasonable Arabs and diminish the incentive or ability of the others to make trouble:—

(*a*) An amnesty in the form of an assurance that no charges or claims for compensation against exiles who return within a certain period would be admitted in respect of offences committed before they return. A promise might perhaps also be given that cases of those already sentenced would be sympathetically reviewed.

(*b*) A declaration that illegal immigrants will not merely be deducted from the quota but also remain "Foreign Jews" and be treated after the war in the same way as Jewish refugees in other territory under British control. This would help to reassure those who genuinely fear [if that any] restriction of immigration to 75,000 either cannot, or in fact will not be fulfilled. It is commonly believed that illegal immigration or at any rate total immigration, already amounts to 50,000, and that smuggling via Turkey still continues even though the sea is closed.

(*c*) The appointment of a few Palestinians to be heads of departments. I agree that this would not do much to satisfy Iraqi [group undecypherable] Foreign Minister's (see paragraph 3) wish to work from the top downwards, but it would show that we were taking the first step in our own Policy of Constitutional Development.

(*d*) Although no particular attention seems to have been given to the establishment of an Elective Legislature (paragraph 10 (5) of White Paper), if progress to this end were possible it would be further positive evidence of our good faith.

5. As regards confederation I learn from British adviser that Iraqi politicians who are in close consultation with Palestinians here have decided to press forward with the scheme comprising Iraq, Palestine and Transjordan.

Saudi Arabia is to be included from the outset in the discussions and, if possible, in the confederation. Syria is to be omitted for the time being as it is realised that His Majesty's Government are not in a position at present to influence the French.

6. Nuri Pasha's military mission stated that there would be no difficulty in [illegible] Anglo-Iraqi Alliance to cover all members of the confederation, removal of [illegible] customs barriers should it is considered be particularly advantageous to Jewish [illegible] Government, recalling paragraph 2 (1) of the conclusion of the Peel Report [illegible]

7. In the past, largely out of consideration for the French His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have been reluctant to make any public statement. In the present [illegible] circumstances, and as a counter-move against Axis Powers, they might, however, be willing to make it known that they would regard with benevolent sympathy any move towards federation which might be initiated by the Arab States themselves. In return we could ask for some public expression and tangible evidence of solidarity with His Majesty's Government.

8. I have shown the above to Colonel Newcombe, who agrees generally [illegible] in sending report to Lord Lloyd in my telegram No. 409.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 20, Saving; Jerusalem No. 9, Saving; Jeddah, No. [illegible] Saving; Government of India, No. 9 Saving; Ankara, No. 5 Saving.)

E 2358/2355/31

Telegram from High Commissioner, Palestine. (Communicated by Colonial Office, Received August 8.)

(Telegraphic.) *August 7, 1940*

ON the 22nd July Arab Legion arrested two Arabs at H 4 pumping station for entering Transjordan from Iraq without passports. The two men were Palestinians, described as fellaheen, and the Transjordan authorities summarily deported them to Palestine, where they were taken over by the police at Jisr Mejamie. Both belonged to Galilee district and had taken active part as gangsters in disturbances. One of the men, Ahmed Abdel Qadir Haj Ahmed, was found to be in possession of letters for delivery to certain persons in Palestine addressed by pseudonyms and a military permit to enter the Rashid camp Bagdad. Some of the letters are conspiratorial in tone and refer in cryptic terms to hidden stores of arms in Palestine; the general sense is expectation of early [illegible] possession of military training manuals but these and the arms were confiscated [illegible] which the following are the main points. (The other man, who is reported to be of low mental type, contributed nothing of value):—

(1) Palestinian gangsters are being trained in the use of firearms and military tactics by Iraq n.c.o.'s in Rashid military camp in Bagdad, necessary selection of candidates and arrangements being made by prominent ex-gang leaders now in Bagdad.

(2) Purpose of (1) is to train a number of section leaders for bands, which are to be provided with arms alleged to be still concealed in Palestine.

(3) Revival of disturbances in Palestine on a large scale is expected by [illegible] arrested persons in Iraq.

As the pass found in the possession of Ahmed Qadir was signed by [illegible] in accordance with his statement at Rashid camp, it is a fair assumption that [illegible]

2. We have long suggested that Iraq authorities were implicated in the [illegible]

appears to furnish proof which was lacking. In conjunction with [illegible] reported from Intelligence in Iraq of activities of Fawzi [illegible] endeavouring to procure desertion to Syria of Iraq n.c.o.'s, present information points to the organisation of a more determined offensive against established authorities in Palestine and mandate, and not merely to attempt to advance political objectives by blackmailing methods common during the past year. Every effort will, of course, be made to ensure (?) internally that rebellion stands no chance of showing itself in Palestine; but I trust that a vigorous *demarche* will be made to the Iraq Government forthwith or after such enquiries as may be considered necessary to confirm this information.

I am sending copies of documents and statement to His Majesty's Ambassador at Baghdad.

(Addressed to Secretary of State for the Colonies, No. 741 Secret. Repeated to Baghdad, No. 477.)

E 2355/2356/31 No. 283

Viscount Halifax to Sir B. Newton (Baghdad)

(No. 395.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, August* 14, 1940

JERUSALEM telegram No. 741 [of 7th August] to Colonial Office. [Iraqi intrigue in Palestine].

Statement of arrested man and fact that he was in possession of a pass for Rashid camp and military training manuals seems sufficiently to indicate that training of Palestine gangsters for subversive activities in Palestine has been undertaken at least with connivance of senior Iraqi army officers.

2. I realise that, in view of present state of public feeling in Iraq and wide spread doubts about British military strength, position of friendly elements in Iraqi Government is difficult and that representations in respect of assistance given to rebel leaders may lead to little beyond flat denial or worthless assurances for the future. As however information received seems conclusive and has been obtained at first hand, I feel that the opportunity should be taken to make strong representations about the serious state of affairs disclosed.

3. Unless, therefore, you see strong objection, I shall be glad if your Excellency will draw attention of the Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs, in whatever manner you think best, to report contained in High Commissioner's telegram under reference and point out that this disclosure cannot fail to make the most unfortunate impression on His Majesty's Government. You should also request that immediate and energetic steps be taken by the Iraqi Government to put an end to these plots on the part of Iraqi authorities for the revival of [illegible] against their ally.

4. [illegible] representations pending result of any enquiries you may feel able to make.

(Repeated to Jerusalem, No. 708.)

E 2288/2029/66 No. 284

Viscount Halifax to Sir B. Newton (Baghdad)

(No. 418.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, August* 20, 1940

YOUR telegram No. 408.

[illegible] Colonel Newcombe should not return to Iraq.

2. [illegible] His Majesty's Government. Anxious as we are to secure Arab goodwill, it is [illegible] paper of May 1939 and it is clear from the outcome of Newcombe's discussions that the members of the old Arab Higher Committee now in Iraq are no more ready to accept that policy [illegible] In these [illegible] conclusive solution" to the Palestine question by negotiation with these elements.

Incidentally, it may be pointed out that Newcombe's references to the Arab Higher Committee give a somewhat misleading impression. Even if His Majesty's Government were prepared to discuss matters with members of committee, persons with whom he has been in discussion at Baghdad cannot be regarded as authorised spokesmen of a body five of whose members by returning to Palestine, must be regarded as having broken away from it altogether.

3. [illegible] the Mufti shall not be permitted to return to Palestine, and a similar ban must necessarily operate against Jamal Husseini so long as he maintains his present political attitude. It is vitally important in the interest of those moderate Arabs in Palestine who may be ready in due course to co-operate in carrying out our policy that there should be no doubt about His Majesty's Government's intention to adhere to this decision, and for this reason we are bound to avoid any suggestion that we are prepared to negotiate with the Mufti or his immediate followers.

4. As regards the alternative suggestions in paragraph 4 of your telegram, I have the following comments:—

(*a*) As you know, much has been done already by the Palestine Government in the matter of measures of lenency. These measures have been instrumental in securing in large measure the restoration of normal internal conditions and in encouraging the return of large numbers of exiles. The objections from the point of view of the internal situation in Palestine to the declaration of a general amnesty are so strong that it could only be justified if political advantages far greater than can reasonably be expected were likely to be gained by such a declaration. In the circumstances, I fear that it is not possible to make any further concessions under this head.

(*b*) The white paper stated specifically that, if economic absorptive capacity permitted, 75,000 immigrants would be admitted to Palestine during the five years from April 1939, and that at the end of that period no further Jewish immigration would be permitted unless the Arabs of Palestine were prepared to acquiesce in it. The white paper stated also that the numbers of any Jewish illegal immigrants who might succeed in entering the country and could not be deported would be deducted from the yearly quotas. I recognise that Arab opinion is [illegible] unnaturally exercised at the fact that, out of total five-year maximum of 75,000, no fewer than 28,000 Jewish immigrants have secured admission since April 1939 and that measures to prevent illegal entries have been ineffective. It may well be that policy in regard to illegal immigration will have to be reviewed hereafter in light of white paper undertakings, but it is not desirable to make any statement on this subject at present stage.

(*c*) The ruling on the implementation of the constitution part of the white paper conveyed to you in my telegram No. 299 was decided upon after careful consideration by the Cabinet, and it is not possible to modify that decision.

(*d*) It was made clear in paragraph 10 (5) of the white paper that progress with the establishment of an elective legislature would only be made if public opinion in Palestine should show itself in favour of such a development, and provided that local conditions permitted. There has so far been no evidence of any interest, either within or outside Palestine, in this proposal, and in the circumstances it does not seem that any progress could be usefully made at the present time. In any event, it would be difficult to make any progress with this project unless the first steps under paragraph 10 (4) had been taken.

5. I should be glad if, provided that your Excellency sees no objection, you will now take an appropriate opportunity [illegible] reply authorised in my telegram No. 299. In view of the somewhat negative [illegible] couple with it an expression of His Majesty's Government's views on federation as set out in my telegram No. 416.

(Repeated to Angora, No. 798, Cairo, No. 824, Jerusalem, No. 736, Jedda No. 125, and Beirut, No. 85.)

E 2283 2029 65. No. 285

Viscount Halifax to Sir B. Newton (Baghdad)

(No. 419. Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, August 20, 1940*

MY immediately preceding telegram [of 20th August].

Following observations are solely for your general guidance in any further discussions you may have about Palestine:—

2. His Majesty's Government fully appreciate need for securing by any [illegible] this object in view they have always done what they could to meet representations of Arab States in matters relating to Palestine. If it were now possible to make some attempt to concession on to the Arabs which went appreciably beyond the policy laid down in May 1939, the attempt to satisfy them might be well worth making. [illegible] whether any minor concessions within the framework of that policy would have [illegible] Middle East will ultimately depend. [illegible] the Mufti would have a most unfortunate effect on those moderates in Palestine who are less unwilling than others to accept the practical compromise contained [illegible] the policy of His Majesty's Government for Palestine is fixed, and cannot be [illegible] fulfilment of that policy. As far as the constitutional question is concerned, we cannot go now beyond decision notified in my telegram No. 299 [of 10th July]. Our attitude towards the Mufti has been repeatedly made clear and will not be changed.

While His Majesty's Government regret that Palestine question should be [illegible] cannot amend their policy in the hope of rallying Arab opinion to their side. It is their intention to do their utmost to defend the Arabs against Germany and Italy, and they have no doubt about the ultimate issue, whatever local advantages their enemies may gain temporarily. All thinking Arabs will no doubt recognise that [illegible] could be worse for them than a German or Italian victory, and it [illegible] Great Britain shall win the war, however much they may dislike certain parts of British policy. Their failure to co-operate will only weaken their case when the hour of victory comes.

(Repeated to Angora, No. 801, Cairo, No. 823, Jerusalem, No. 747, Jeddah, No. 129, and Beirut, No. 86.)

E 2474 2029 65 No. 286

Sir M. Lampson to Viscount Halifax. (Received August 20.)

(No. 937.)
(Telegraphic.) *Cairo, August 19, 1940*

JEDDA telegram No. 189, paragraph 3.

As your Lordship is aware (see my telegram No. 718 of 21st January), I have long felt something is stirring in the Arab world and that, if, as I hope, we attach importance to keeping the Arabs with us, we should be well advised to consider whether we can do anything to meet it without [illegible] prejudice. To me it has seemed for many years past (see my telegrams spread over recent years) that the Arabs had at least considerable nuisance value, if nothing else.

2. There is undoubtedly strong and growing belief among the Arabs that we are hanging back in the implementation of promises given in our white paper

regarding Palestine. With all respect I share that belief. Quite apart from the serious increase in illegal immigration of Jews (figures vary, but Arabs claim that 52,000 have come into Palestine—out of final total of 75,000 spread over five years allowed by the white paper), point of invariable criticism is our slowness of action regarding local representation in the government of the country. Last thing I wish to recommend is anything which would, in fact, lead to increased difficulties in Palestine, but I cannot myself see why readiness to implement sub-heading (4) of paragraph 10 of white paper should do so. Palestinians in charge of Government departments with British advisers behind them to do all work and all subject to control of the High Commissioner seems pretty innocuous. On the other hand, with Syria in the melting-pot, Nuri Said on the rampage and Ibn Saud saying "His Majesty's Government should decide *now* on the future [illegible] and do it fairly soon to keep the Arab world quiet, we risk being faced in the near future with increased demands as regards Palestine.

3. Would it not be worth asking the High Commissioner whether, in the light of more recent developments and the present tendencies, he still thinks it premature to implement sub-head (4) of paragraph 10 of white paper?

(Repeated to Jerusalem, No. [illegible] 4351, Baghdad, No. 52, Jedda, No. 34; Angora, No. 66, and Beirut, No. 78. Copy to General Wavell and air officer commanding in chief.)

E 2503 2503 65 No. 287

Communicated by Colonial Office.—(Received August 20.)

(1)

Sir H. Macmichael to Lord Lloyd.

(Secret.) *High Commissioner for Transjordan*
My Lord, *Jerusalem, July 14, 1940.*

I HAVE the honour to enclose herewith the original and translation of a letter sent to your Lordship by His Highness the Amir Abdulla with the request that it be transmitted to you by the quickest possible means.

2. I do not think I need expatiate upon the background and motives of the letter beyond saying that His Highness is not unmindful of the events of 1916, when his father declared war upon our enemies, his brother commanded [illegible] army in the south. His father and his [illegible] are dead, and he is condemned to inaction as Amir of the little State of Transjordan.

He realises that at present there is nothing which he can do with His Majesty's Government's approval except possess his soul in patience and control his people, but he finds the process irksome and dull, and he is uninterested in "stability" as a policy for Syria or elsewhere. Moreover, he feels, above all, that if and when anything happens calling for action either to the north or south of Transjordan, his "army" (the Arab Legion) will hardly be commensurate with the greatness of the task or his own dignity. His repeated efforts to increase its size have usually been countered by arguments derived from the cost that would be involved, coupled with the fact that the force is large enough to carry out the duties allotted to it of preserving internal security. To this he would retort (*a*) that if Great Britain is ready to pay for Poles, Czechs, &c., it should be even more ready to pay for the Arab Legion; (*b*) that a more forward policy than that of preserving internal security may at any time become possible, if not imperative, and he should be ready for it.

3. Your Lordship, like myself, will feel a strong sympathy with the aspirations voiced in the Amir's letter, but one cannot be blind to certain weaknesses in the arguments implied, *e.g.*, King Hussein had an enemy, with whom contact was easy, to fight; the Polish Brigade would be ready to serve at any distance from their native land; a full-blown Transjordanian army might in foreseeable circumstances be more of a liability than an asset.

4. Unfortunately these arguments cannot well be put to the Amir, and I can only suggest that your Lordship reply on general lines of appreciation coupled with an advocacy of patience, a statement of the great need for maintenance of stability in the Arab world, and an assurance that the points made by His Highness will remain in mind

I have, &c.
HAROLD MACMICHAEL
High Commissioner for Transjordan

(2)

The Amir Abdullah to Lord Lloyd

My dear Lord Lloyd, *July* 11, 1940

I HAVE for some time been awaiting an opportunity to write to you in order to give expression to my feelings of affection and pleasure on the occasion of your appointment as Secretary of State for the British Colonies at this historical time in the life of the British Empire—an empire bound by ancient ties to the whole East, and in particular by a special understanding of Moslems in every land. I was only prevented from writing to you as I wished, during the first days of your appointment, by the acute situation which developed at that time. [illegible] to a safe anchorage with God's assistance. Perhaps, indeed, I may not be wrong if I congratulate you on the fact that France has fallen out of the ranks, for it is better for a knight to strike with his own right arm in self defence, rather than that he should be compelled from time to time to neglect his own protection in order to defend a comrade unprepared to fight as a man should—may the result be for good, if God will.

I wish to draw your attention to a matter which may not, indeed, be of primary importance to the West, but which deeply concerns all the East. We have just seen the noble Poles joining the British army in Palestine, and abandoning the French in Syria, and we have read the letter from the British General Officer Commanding in Chief in the Near East to this noble force, welcoming it and expressing the honour which he felt at its inclusion in the British forces under his command. We see that the crisis is still not over in Egypt, and we see Ministers from Iraq going to and returning from Turkey, with results of which we are ignorant. My reason for writing all this, however, is one point only, namely, our anxious desire to find a practical manner in which we may share in victory of Britain over the common enemy. This is the end desired by [illegible] this great struggle, in order that these countries may bear their part willingly, actively and courageously.

The Transjordanians and the Syrians see the Poles battling side by side with the British under Polish flag with Polish arms and led by Polish commanders [illegible] When the [illegible] past war. Then your policy was right when you accepted the Arabs to plunge [illegible] German [illegible] pass the British army only, [illegible] surround me, myself and my country, and all my national hopes. In Iraq you are well aware of the situation there, while the Arabian peninsula is in the hands of a man whose attitude towards [illegible]

the Ottoman Government, of which he was then one of the protégés. I wish [illegible] eyes of Britain, and that, in their own country, they are not inferior to the Poles in Palestine. I do not think that it is meet that I should be asked only to maintain public security and no more. On the contrary, it is only right that I should see myself in the position in which I am qualified to stand when the events occur which now threaten to take place in Syria as a result of the act on of the common enemies of yourselves and ourselves.

It appears to me that the Arabs—including North Africa—look for a place in a new formation of a British and Arab Commonwealth of nations which will follow victory—if God wills, uniting in their economics and in their defence, and they wish to see Britain and her dominions relying solely upon the strongest of [illegible] to any European nation as she was formerly bound to France until the latter abandoned her in the present crisis.

Please accept, my dear Lord Lloyd, my deepest respect and affection.

Your Excellency's sincere friend
ABDULLAH BIN AL HUSSEIN

(3)

Lord Lloyd to Sir H. MacMichael

(Secret.) *Colonial Office,*
Sir, *Downing Street, August* 23, 1940

I HAVE [illegible] to acknowledge the receipt of your secret despatch of the 14th July forwarding a letter addressed to me by His Highness the Amir Abdullah.

2. I am in general agreement with the views expressed in that despatch, and I shall be grateful if you will cause the enclosed reply to be forwarded to His Highness.

I have, &c.
LLOYD

(4)

Lord Lloyd to the Amir Abdullah

Your Highness, *August* 22, 1940

I HAVE received with great pleasure your Highness's letter of the 11th July, which has just reached me. Your congratulations on my appointment as Secretary of State [illegible] I [illegible] happy in being able thus to renew official associations with so old a friend.

It is not a matter for surprise to me that your Highness, on whose memory the joint endeavours and achievements of Arabs and British in the last war must be as fresh as they are in mine, should be anxious once again to co-operate to the fullest extent in the struggle against the common enemy. It is no more than I and my colleagues would have expected from so loyal a friend of Great Britain.

But I must ask your Highness to believe me when I say that, in the circumstances as they now are, the largest measure of help in your power can be given by the patient exertion of your great influence to ensure and maintain stability in the Arab world.

In times like the present there are many forces making for disruption and disorder, and our enemies, for their own ends, will be quick to turn to their own advantage any signs of weakness or confusion. It is, therefore, a matter for profound satisfaction to His Majesty's Government to have in your Highness a friend in whose wisdom and vigilance they can repose such confidence and whose influence will, they know, be directed to the support and encouragement of all those forces who are working to secure victory for the Allies.

With warm regards,
Your Highness's sincere friend,
LLOYD.

E 2506 31 31] No. 288

Viscount Halifax to Sir M Lampson (Cairo)

(No 928)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office Sep* [illegible] 12 1940

YOUR telegram No 937 [of 19th August] Palestine policy, crossed my telegrams Nos. 418 and 419 [of 20th August], to Bagdad and 131 [of 22nd August] to Jedda.

There is, I think, no justification for belief that His Majesty's Government have failed to implement policy for Palestine laid down in May 1939. As stated in above-mentioned telegrams to Bagdad, immigration and land sales are already being regulated in accordance with that policy. Immigration figures so far are not 52,000 but 28,000, including illegal immigrants who are deductable from [illegible] White Paper. It may be noted, moreover, that, under the White Paper, the 25,000 refugees for which it provides may be admitted at any time if assurances of support are forthcoming so even if there had been no illegal immigration since April 1939, present total of 28,000 could still have been reached during eighteen months in question (allowing 15,000 "ordinary" immigrants at White Paper rate of 10,000) a year plus, say, 13,000 "refugees") [illegible] beyond terms of White Paper.

2. [illegible] Paper lays down explicitly that first step in constitutional progress, viz., appointment of a few Palestinian heads of departments, can only take place when "peace and order have been sufficiently restored in Palestine" High Commissioner may be able to declare that this is the case before war ends but even so, it will probably be found impracticable to embark on constitutional and administrative changes of this nature under war conditions, particularly as Palestine may be closely involved in military operations in Middle [illegible] Majesty's Government feel that these considerations afford ad[illegible] for delay, especially as there is so far no strong demand among [illegible] Palestine itself for implementation of paragraph 10 (4) of White Paper, or for any other form of constitutional advance.

3. For your own information, I need not add that immediate implementation of paragraph 10 (4) would arouse deep Jewish resentment. But for the war this would have to be faced as under paragraph 10 (3) we are pledged to go ahead whether one side or the other co-operates or not, but under war conditions His Majesty's Government regard maintenance of present comparative peace in Palestine as of the utmost importance, and they could not contemplate taking action which would be likely to rekindle racial animosity and endanger internal [illegible]

4. You may rest assured that His Majesty's Government and the High Commissioner are anxious to establish contacts and regular consultation on matters affecting Arab interests with representative moderate Arab leaders in Palestine who accept 1939 policy, and they have good hopes of achieving this.

(Repeated to Angora No. 929, Bagdad, No. 470, Jedda, No. 145, Jerusalem, No. 828 and Beirut, No. 108.)

E 2355 2356 31] No. 289

Sir B Newton to Viscount Halifax (Received September 14)

(No. 546)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, September 12, 1940*

YOUR telegram No 398.

I handed note to [illegible] Premier giving the facts reported by Jerusalem and asking that immediate steps should be taken to put a stop to the training of Palestinian refugees (copy of note was sent to you with my despatch No. 393 of 27th August). Minister for Foreign Affairs replied in writing on 9th September stating that Ministry of Defence, after careful enquiry, were satisfied that there was no truth in the information which had reached the British authorities. Ahmad Abdul Qadir's pass for Rashid camp is explained away as having been given to him as workman's identity card (copy of this reply is being sent by bag).

I have no information that further squads are being trained at Rashid camp but there are reports from good sources that twenty better-educated Palestinians [illegible] months in military college. I have, however, no documentary evidence, and Minister for Foreign Affairs, if challenged, would no doubt deny the whole thing. He is at present away, but sent me message that he was personally convinced of the inaccuracy of the reports referred to in paragraph 1 above. My representations will, in short, probably have good, even if only temporary, effect.

(Repeated to Jerusalem No. 19, Saving, by bag.)

E 2353 2355 31] No. 290

Sir B Newton to Viscount Halifax—(Received October 17.)

(No. 436.)

[illegible] Bagdad presents his compliments to His [illegible] for Foreign Affairs, and with reference [illegible] dated the 12th September, 1940, has the honour to [illegible] copy of a note dated the 9th September, 1940, from the Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs—Alleged training of Palestinians in Iraqi Army.

Bagdad, September 14, 1940.

Enclosure in No. 290

Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs to Sir B Newton

Your Excellency, *Bagdad, September 9, 1940.*

WITH reference to your letter No. 381 dated August [illegible] statement of a bedouin who had illegally crossed the [illegible] I have the [illegible] These statements [illegible] in character are not unlikely to [illegible] monetary reward from the British [illegible]

In fact, the laws and regulations in force in the Iraqi Army do not at all allow a non-Iraqi to receive training in military schools or in courses within the army.

As regards the document found in the possession of the arrested person [illegible] camps, and the arrested person is likely to have been employed as [illegible]

I can assure your Excellency that no officer of the Iraqi Army would help [illegible] anything calculated to affect the common interests and the good relations obtaining between our two Governments.

I avail, &c.
NURI-AL-SAID

E 2355 2355 31] No 291

Sir B Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received October 17.)

(No 452.)

My Lord, *Baghdad, September 26, 1940*

WITH reference to my telegram No 540 of the 12th September, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that on the 24th September, at my first interview with the Minister for Foreign Affairs on his return from a short holiday in the north I spoke to him again about the information received in Palestine that military training was being given to Palestinian insurgents in the Rashid cantonment near Baghdad

2. I said that I was the more relieved to have received the assurance contained in his letter of the 9th September because other information given by the man who had been arrested at the Transjordan frontier had been found to be inaccurate This showed that the man had not merely spun a yarn in order to obtain money from the police, and I added that the other suggestion offered in the Minister's letter that the pass which this man had in his possession for admission into the Rashid cantonment was a workman's identity card did not explain the work upon which he had been engaged nor why it should have been necessary to employ a Palestinian in a military camp. I also told the Minister for Foreign Affairs that since my last talk with him on this subject I had heard from several sources that about twenty educated Palestinians had been attached during the last four months to the reserve officers' training course at the Military [illegible]llege. These men, so it was said had all been chosen by Palestinian organisa[illegible]ons in Iraq as being likely to make insurgent leaders for Palestine, and included six men who had been employed as teachers by the Ministry of [illegible]

[illegible] declared that he knew nothing about any Palestinians having [illegible] into the Reserve Officers' training course but said that he would [illegible] made about the pass found in the possession of the arrested [illegible] pass itself to him. I reminded him that I had already [illegible] copy so that all the facts concerning it would be available to those concerned

4. I do not expect the action described above to lead to any great change in the treatment of Palestinian refugees by the Government and their authorities, but by showing that we are informed of what is going on and are not to be hoodwinked we may perhaps make the Government more careful and check the worst forms of clandestine encouragement and help which is being given to these rebels.

5 I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's High C[illegible] for Palestine and Transjordan at Jerusalem

I have, &c.
BASIL NEWTON

CHAPTER IV. -SYRIA

E 155 155 69] No. 292

Consul-General Havard to Viscount Halifax.—(Received January 12, 1940.)

(No 128 E.)

My Lord, *Beirut, December 13, 1939*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that on the 11th December the French High Commissioner signed a decree No. 356 LR, exte[illegible] Italian merchandise the benefits of the normal customs tariff [illegible] 11th February 1940

2. Italy's withdrawal from membership of the League of Nations having become effective on the 11th December, that country should strictly have lost the benefits of the normal tariff, applied to States members of the League and to the [illegible] rule to States receding from Geneva, but have preferred to prolong the special customs treatment by special decree pending the signature of new commercial agreements

[illegible] is not only an important supplier to the Levant States under [illegible] but for the last two or three years has been one of their best [illegible] the French authorities have therefore considered it advantageous to prolong existing arrangements. It is more than likely that further periods of two months' grace will be given, since I am informed that no negotiations for any new commercial agreement with Italy have yet been set on foot

4. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassadors at Paris and Rome, His Majesty's High Commissioner at Jerusalem, the Department of Overseas Trade and His Majesty's Consuls at Damascus and Aleppo.

I have &c.
G T HAVARD

E 524 155 89] No. 293

Consul-General Havard to Viscount Halifax.—(Received February 24.)

(No. 10 E.)

My Lord, *Beirut, February 12, 1940.*

WITH reference to my despatch No 128 E of the 13th December last, I have the honour to report that on the 10th February the High Commissioner signed a Decree No. 35 LR, extending, *sine die*, the benefit of the normal customs tariff to Italian goods imported into the French mandated territories of the Levant

2. I am sending copies of this despatch to the Department of Overseas Trade, His Majesty's Ambassadors at Paris and Rome, His Majesty's High Commissioner for Palestine, and His Majesty's Consuls at Damascus and Aleppo

I have, &c.
G T HAVARD

[E 1611, 1611 89] No. 294

Sir H. Knatchbull-Hugessen to Viscount Halifax.—(Received April 12.)

(No. 226.)

My Lord, *Angora, April 2, 1940*

WITH reference to Sir Percy Loraine's despatch No. 351 of the 16th July 1938, and to my despatch No 357 of the 29th June, 1939, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that a Turco-Syrian "Bon Voisinage" Convention was signed at Angora on the 30th March Various protocols are annexed to the convention dealing with extradition, railway transport, sanitary questions,

frontier questions, veterinary questions, customs matters and matters relating to optants. I shall forward copies of these instruments so soon as they become [illegible]

2. The [illegible] was signed on behalf of Turkey by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and on behalf of Syria by the French Ambassador in Turkey, M. René Massigli, and the French High Commissioner in Syria, M. Gabriel Puaux, who made a special journey to Angora for the purpose.

3. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassador at Paris, His Majesty's Consul-General at Beirut and His Majesty's Consul at Mersin.

I have &c.
H. M. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN

E 1888/1828/89] No. 295

Acting Consul, Damascus, to Viscount Halifax.—(Received April 27.)

No. 7.
(Telegraphic.) *Damascus, April 27, 1940.*

FOLLOWING is substance of communiqué officially inspired appearing in to-day's press:—

"On 25th July, 1939, a number of armed men were found before the house of the President of the Syrian Council of [? Directors]. The subsequent enquiry revealed a widespread plot to assassinate the head of the Government and a number of French officers and to provoke insurrection in Syria. The organiser of the plot was Adel al Azmeh, who fled to Iraq. The enquiry further established the fact that the leaders of the movement were taking their orders from agents of the German Propaganda Ministry. As the plot was directed against internal security of the State, the military court was ordered to deal with it. Twenty-seven persons were charged, eleven of them *in absentia*, for plotting against the State. Seven of the accused, of whom two were absent, were further charged with the attempted assassination of the President of the Council [? of Directors]. On 11th April the seven were condemned to death and the remainder to various terms of imprisonment ranging from five to twenty years. Those condemned to death [? have] appealed to Military Cour de Cassation, which is not now examining the case. The death sentences pronounced by the military court are not, therefore, final."

2. I understand from the head of the French Military Intelligence Service here that there is little likelihood of the death sentences being confirmed. He told me that the reopening of the case is significant, as the only normal appeal from a death sentence given by the Military Court is to the French President.

3. In the circumstances, I doubt if the French would appreciate any attempt by us to intervene in the matter, whereas it would be more difficult for them to take exception to a plea for clemency coming from the Egyptian Prime Minister.

4. A complete list of sentences accompanies Damascus Political Report No. 9, which is being sent by confidential bag.

5. I will telegraph the results of the appeal or any other developments.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 2.)

E 1936/1828/89] No. 296

Acting Consul, Damascus, to Viscount Halifax.—(Received May 1.)

No. 9.
(Telegraphic.) *En clair.* *Damascus, May 1, 1940.*

GERMAN propaganda has tried to exploit sentences pronounced by the [illegible] Syrian Council of Directors. The Office Arabe has obtained from official sources special information of a nature which demolishes the lies of the German broadcasts. The Office Arabe learns that the persons condemned to death had confessed

and their confessions were confirmed by witnesses, and that, moreover, they were incited by German propaganda agents. Arms seized were supplied from German sources. Condemned persons are not notables as stated by the German broadcasts, but, on the contrary, hirelings with criminal records. Above facts were established by the military court. German broadcasts report execution of condemned accompanied by protest demonstrations. Appeal Court at Beirut, in quashing death sentences and reopening trial, proves falsity of German allegations.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 4, and Beirut [illegible])

E 2170/2170/89] No. 297

Mr. Stonehewer-Bird to Viscount Halifax. (Received June 21.)

(No. 108.)
(Telegraphic.) *Jedda, June 21, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 139 of 7th October, 1939.

Amir Faisal has asked me to elicit the views of His Majesty's Government regarding new situation which Saudi Arabian Government fear may arise as the result of the armistice negotiations between France and Germany. Ibn Saud wishes to know whether there is any truth in the rumour that the German Italian solution is the partition of Syria between Italy and Turkey—a solution dangerous alike to His Majesty's Government and to Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabian Government are doubtful as to the ability of the French in Syria to maintain in [illegible] event their position with the forces at their disposal and would like to see stronger forces there. Ibn Saud does not wish to take hasty action and realises that he cannot do anything without the assistance of His Majesty's [illegible] but feels that both he and His Majesty's Government may be surprised by a sudden *coup*. He begs that His Majesty's Government may, as they have always done, keep him fully informed about any new development.

2. The message was brought by kaimakam, who, as usual, wished me to dictate an immediate reply. I said that His Royal Highness would not expect me to be able to answer point blank, off hand and without consulting His Majesty's Government. I would immediately convey to your Lordship the gist of His Royal Highness's message. I thought that, pending reply of the German Government to the French overtures, nothing could be stated regarding French intentions in Syria, but, speaking personally, I felt that I could assure him that His Majesty's Government would keep me and the Saudi Arabian Government informed of any new developments in the Arab lands.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 36, Baghdad, No. 34, and Jerusalem, No. 39.)

E 2170/2170/89] No. 298

Viscount Halifax to Mr. Stonehewer Bird (Jedda).

(No. 69.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June 23, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 108 [of 21st June: Future of Syria].

In agreement with Commander-in-chief of French forces, French High Commissioner has informed His Majesty's Consul-General at Beirut in [illegible] that French authorities in Syria and the Lebanon are determined [illegible] whatever instructions they receive from French Government, while [illegible] President has just given French Ambassador at Angora categorical assurances that Turkish Government have no designs whatever on Syria, and could not tolerate the Italian Government gaining a foothold there, as this would be the beginning of encirclement of Turkey.

2. In view of attitude of French authorities and of Turkish Government [illegible] that nothing should be done either by His Majesty's Government or by Arab States to make task of French authorities more difficult.

3. You should therefore inform Emir Feisal that His Majesty's Government will certainly keep Saudi Arabian Government informed. They have no knowledge of German or Italian plans for Syria, but all information at their

disposal leads them to reject rumour which has reached His Majesty's Government as pure invention so far as Turkish connivance is concerned. They have reason to believe that Turkish Government would not tolerate establishment of Italian foothold anywhere in Syria, and have no intention of taking advantage of difficulties of French Government. Moreover, His Majesty's Government are in close contact with the French authorities in Syria, and are satisfied that there is no immediate reason for alarm. They are determined to give French authorities all possible help of which they may stand in need, and they are strongly of the view that it is in the interests of all Arab States to do nothing which would embarrass the French authorities or make their task more difficult.

4. You should add that His Majesty's Ambassador at Bagdad is being instructed to speak in similar terms to Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs.

5. You should volunteer no views about political future of Syria. If pressed on this point, you should say that, speaking personally, you do not regard this as a matter which can be decided at a moment like this. Immediate and overruling requirement is that no other non Arab Power should establish itself in Syria, and that all Arab countries should help to that end.

(Repeated to Bagdad, No. 252, Angora, No. 495, and Cairo (for Middle East Intelligence Centre), No. 500.)

E 2170/2170/89 No. 299

Viscount Halifax to Sir B. Newton (Bagdad).

(No. 254.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June 23, 1940.*

YOUR telegrams Nos. 279 and 280 (of 20th June): Future of Syria.

My telegram No. 252a contains repetition of telegram to His Majesty's Minister at Jedda, who has been asked by Ibn Saud for views of His Majesty's Government regarding situation in Syria following armistice negotiations between France and Germany. Ibn Saud referred in particular to rumour of partition of Syria between Italy and Turkey.

2. You may speak to General Nuri on the same lines, explaining to him that similar communication has been made to Ibn Saud.

3. I trust that Iraqi Government will not press for immediate action on lines of (*a*), (*b*) and (*c*) of your telegram No. 279. As I have said to His Majesty's M[illegible]

4. [illegible] as soon as possible.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 501 (for M.E.I.C.), Jedda, No. 70, and Angora, No. 496.)

E 2170/2170/89 No. 300

Mr. Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received June 24.)

(No. 111.)
(Telegraphic.) *Jedda, June 23, 1940.*

MY telegram No. 108.

Amir spoke his fears regarding the future of Syria now that France had signed armistice. He did not see how French in Syria, divorced from their Central Government, could maintain their position, especially as they had been at no pains to propitiate the people, but had, on the contrary, foolishly shown a much heavier hand. I said I had, immediately on receipt of his previous communication on this subject, telegraphed your Lordship and awaited your reply. Meanwhile, we must wait in patience. His Royal Highness could rest assured that His Majesty's Government would have been giving problem earnest thought since collapse of France appeared inevitable. Asked by me whether he had any personal views, he replied he preferred to await those of His Majesty's Government, but that he hoped [group omitted: ? in] world in which events marched with such lightning rapidity you will not be surprised by a *fait accompli*.

My Iraqi colleague, who came to see me on 17th June, put into words the thought of Amir Faisal, and expressed his fear of an invasion of Syria by Turkey, and doubted whether French would or could resist.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 38 (for Middle East Intelligence Centre); Bagdad, No. 35, and Jerusalem, No. 31.)

E 2170/2170/89 No. 301

Mr. Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received June 26.)

(No. 121.)
(Telegraphic.) *Jedda, June 26, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 69.

I spoke to Amir Faisal this morning in terms indicated. I am, at his request, confirming in writing for Ibn Saud's information.

Amir Faisal expressed gratitude for information and views conveyed to him. He spoke of mistakes foreign countries had made in Syria, and compared French policy there unfavourably with that of His Majesty's Government, *e.g.*, in Egypt, but did not express any views on Syria.

(Repeated to Bagdad, No. 38, Cairo, No. 40 (Mice).)

E 2170/2170/89 No. 302

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received June 26.)

(No. 294.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, June 26, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 253.

The Prime Minister called on me yesterday morning to talk about Syria. He said that a number of Syrian political leaders had been in a body to Beirut and had persuaded the Iraqi Consul General to send a vice-consul to Bagdad with a message appealing to Iraqi Government to save Syria from the danger [illegible] position in which it was now placed. I explained that the French officers were greatly upset and excited, that the French army was arresting political personalities and bullying the people, and that a dangerous tension was developing.

The Prime Minister said that this account of the situation was confirmed by [illegible] who has just returned to Bagdad on his way back to Saudi Arabia. He had not yet replied to the message brought by the vice-consul, but as he saw it the only way to put things right was to bring into operation without delay the Franco-Syrian Treaty of 1936. If this were done, Syrians would be heart and soul with the Allies, and public opinion in Iraq, which at present was much perturbed, would be reassured. Otherwise, a dangerous situation might occur. The Prime Minister said that [! group omitted: there was] nothing to show that either he himself or Syrian leaders, of whom he had spoke, had any appreciation of the far greater external dangers to which Syria was now opposed.

I observed that there were three outstanding facts in the present situation which I begged the Prime Minister to make clear to all concerned:

(*a*) That if the people of Syria did anything to weaken this position of the French forces in the Levant they would be preparing the way for [illegible]

(*b*) That if Italy or Germany, or even Turkey, occupied Syria it would be lost for ever to the Arabs.

(*c*) That if the people of Syria let the enemy into their country they would not only destroy all their own hopes for the future, but also expose Iraq to deadly danger.

I then explained that I had already represented to you certain views about the future of Syria and its importance to Iraq, which were not in principle dissimilar from those of his Excellency. I had just received certain comments

which, while not unsympathetic, confirmed what I had said above, and emphasised that unless the present were safeguarded there would be no future which the Arabs in Iraq or Syria would have any voice. I then read to him paragraphs 3 and 4 of your telegram No. 253, omitting any mention of (*a*) and (*c*). The second telegram No. 252 had not yet arrived.

(Repeated to Beirut, No. 8, Cairo, No. 105, Jerusalem, No. 39.)

E 2170/2170/89] No. 303

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received June 26.)

(No. 295.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, June 26, 1940.*

MY telegram No. 294.

My French colleague has just left for Beirut to discuss the situation in general with French authorities, and will no doubt influence them in any way he to be conciliatory.

He seemed to think that they were very unsympathetic towards Arabic aspirations, so possibly there may be some basis for the allegations conveyed by the Prime Minister. He agreed that it would be most unfortunate if the French authorities did anything to provoke local inhabitants or Arabs in Iraq at this juncture.

Prime Minister has, however, evidently used and perhaps exaggerated these [illegible] the matter this morning said that the bulk of the leaders were fully conscious of their grave external dangers. I explained to His Royal Highness that French troops were the chief bulwark against these dangers, and repeated some of the points made with the Prime Minister. The Regent quite agreed that when the whole house was in danger of collapse it would be folly to quarrel about internal improvements.

(Repeated to [illegible] group omitted. No. 9, Cairo, No. 106, Jerusalem, No. 40.)

E 2200/2170/89] No. 304

Mr. Howard to Viscount Halifax.—(Received June 27.)

(No. 20.)
(Telegraphic.) *Beirut, June 27, 1940.*

FRENCH High Commissioner sent for me this morning and told me that General Mittelhauser and he had decided to fall into line with the Bordeaux Government. They had been obliged with regret to take this decision as they had learnt from General Noguès that North Africa had taken a similar one. There was, he said, to be no enemy occupation of Syria or of North Africa. General Mittelhauser's army was to be demobilised, but any officers or men who [illegible] Mission [illegible] fizerts under Admiral Esteva was complying with the terms of the armistice.

2. He said also that, although he expected His Majesty's Government would initiate economic measures against Syria, he hoped that commerce between Syria and Palestine would not be interfered with in view of their special relations with each other and that he would give assurances that no Palestine produce would be allowed to find its way to the enem[illegible].

3. (Very secret.) High Commissioner told me that he would try to delay [illegible] possible. He would plead that to send by sea would mean that it would fall into our hands, and even promised to give me names of any ships carrying it should he be forced to export by sea. A word from His Majesty's Government to the Turks not to allow it to go by land would be helpful. High Commissioner evidently wants to sabotage implications of [*sic*] his adherence to the armistice conditions as much as he can.

(Repeated to Cairo, Jerusalem, Angora, Bagdad, Damascus and Aleppo.)

[C 7388/7327/17] No. 305

Viscount Halifax to Mr. Howard (Beirut).

(No. 22.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June 28, 1940.*

YOU have doubtless seen telegrams passing between the War Office and liaison officer about General Mittelhauser.

2. Position as I see it is as follows. In view of public declarations made by High Commissioner and the general, the world at large believes that French authorities in Levant States will continue the fight against Germany and Italy in co-operation with Great Britain. Even if general obeys his orders from [illegible] fact that French authorities would not oppose an attempt by Germany or Italy to occupy Syria and the Lebanon (assuming such an attempt could be made despite the British fleet) will not necessarily become apparent until High Commissioner and general contradict their previous declarations by word or deed (*e.g.*, acknowledging authority of Bordeaux Government).

3. Within a short time, however, doubts would inevitably begin to grow in Turkey and in the Arab countries about intentions of mandatory authorities, and some declaration by His Majesty's Government, for which there is already some pressure, would probably become inevitable.

4. This declaration (about which His Majesty's Government have not, however, taken any decision) might perhaps be to general effect that His Majesty's Government could not allow Syria or the Lebanon to be used by Germany or Italy [illegible] defend, and would have to resist by all the means at their disposal German or Italian attempt to occupy those two countries. It might be necessary to add something to the effect that, whatever His Majesty's Government might find it necessary to do during the war, their action would be entirely without prejudice to the position of Syria and the Lebanon after the war. Wording of any declaration, if it were decided to make one, would need careful consideration in order to avoid arousing the susceptibilities of the French authorities, the Turkish Government and the Arabs.

5. In view, however, of the difficult position which will arise if the French authorities abandon any intention of defending their territory, every effort should be made to encourage General Mittelhauser to abide by his original intention [illegible] if possible, visit Beirut. Should he do so, please show him this telegram and ask him to do his best to persuade the general in last resort. If nothing will induce him to stick to his previous declarations, to avoid letting this become generally known at least for a few days, so that His Majesty's Government may have an opportunity of considering their course of action.

6. You should, in any case, do what you can in discussion with the High Commissioner. The various measures of support which His Majesty's Government can give to Frenchmen fighting for the Allied cause overseas are already known to you. If there are any further ways in which His Majesty's Government can help the French authorities, you should let me know.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 520, Angora, No. 511, Bagdad, No. 264.)

E 2170/2170/89] No. 306

Viscount Halifax to Mr. Howard (Beirut).

(No. 27.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June 28, 1940.*

BAGDAD telegrams Nos. 294 and 295 [of 25th and 26th June: Syria and the Lebanon].

Please telegraph your considered views and those of His Majesty's Consul at Damascus.

2. Although nothing must be ruled out as impossible which is necessary for [illegible] rate very difficult for His Majesty's Government or any other of the parties

concerned to take action purporting to affect permanently the status of Syria or the Lebanon. Apart from any juridical obstacles, His Majesty's Government must try so far as circumstances allow, to avoid prejudicing the rights and interests of an ally who cannot at present speak for herself. Moreover, a promise by the French mandatory authorities or any other French authority not in effective occupation of France itself that the 1936 treaties would be brought into force after the war, and still more a move by such authorities to bring them into force now, would obviously have a decidedly limited value.

3. On the other hand, there is no reason why His Majesty's Government should not press the French authorities to make some gesture of conciliation, such as the summoning of Syrian and Lebanon Parliaments or release of political prisoners, if such action would in your considered opinion in fact, be wise and [illegible] Manner of exerting such pressure would naturally depend upon [illegible] aiming at the [illegible]

4. You should say nothing to French authorities without instructions, and [illegible] and the Lebanon should do anything to make things more difficult (see [illegible] able advice given to Iraqi Prime Minister by Sir B. Newton).

(Repeated to Baghdad, No. 266, and Cairo, No. 531.)

E 2200/2170/89] No. 307

Mr. Havard to Viscount Halifax.—(Received June 29.)

(No. 25.)
(Telegraphic.) *Beirut, June 28, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 22.

General Wavell, after being shown copy of your telegram under reference, saw General Mittelhauser this afternoon and appealed to him to reconsider his decision not to fight, but without success.

2. With reference to Aleppo telegram No. 2 to Jerusalem repeated to you, we also are at present receiving a very large number of applications from French military and naval personnel and complete units to join the British forces, and are encouraging applicants to go to Palestine if possible with their material.

3. I have, nevertheless, impression that, failing an influential leader to rally the French in the Near East, this move will die discouraged. Arrival of Italian Disarmament Commission, which seems to be generally expected, will [illegible]

(Repeated to Jerusalem, Cairo, [Angora] Baghdad and Aleppo.)

E 2200/2170/89] No. 308

Viscount Halifax to Mr. Havard (Beirut).

(No. 28.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June 29, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 20 (of 27th June, Attitude of French authorities in Syria).

You should inform High Commissioner that His Majesty's Government have learned with great distress of his decision and that of the General Officer Commanding. They cannot at a moment's notice define their attitude in the totally new and almost unbelievable situation which compliance with the instructions of the French Government at Bordeaux has brought about in Levant. They will, however, give the matter their immediate consideration. You may add that I greatly appreciate the personal goodwill shown by the High Commissioner.

2. According to a Reuters message from Jerusalem, the French authorities [illegible] it would be quite useless to make any further efforts at this stage to induce them to change their minds whatever line they might take in the event of an imminent

threat of attack from Germany or Italy. I may add for your private information only that urgent consideration is being given to the desirability of a declaration by His Majesty's Government as to their own attitude towards such a situation or in the event of a state of chaos ensuing in Syria or the Lebanon such as would threaten the security of neighbouring countries.

3. This telegram was drafted before receipt of your telegram No. 23 and Damascus telegram No. 19 (of 28th June). You should still make communication on lines set out in paragraph 1.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 535, Jerusalem, No. 2, Angora, No. 520, and Baghdad, No. 267.)

E 2209/2170/89] No. 309

Sir H. Knatchbull-Hugessen to Viscount Halifax.—(Received June 29.)

(No. 659.)
(Telegraphic.) *Angora, June 28, 1940.*

My telegram No. 625.

Nuri Pasha leaves this evening.

2. He tells me that he is entirely satisfied with his conversations here, especially in so far as they have been clearing up all suspicions [illegible] of Turkish imperialistic ambitions. He is now quite convinced that they have no designs either on Mosul vilayet or on Syria.

3. He has discussed the Syrian question exhaustively with them. He has suggested the policy of "Syria for the Syrians." He favours this as a [illegible] provisional] policy coupled with maintenance of present *status quo* under the French administration until acquainted [illegible] group omitted terms of] peace conference and also as design to make it clear both to Germany and to Italy or to other possible aspirants that imperialistic ambitions as regards Syria would be resisted and would encounter opposition from entire Arabic element. He considers [illegible] are in favour of this policy but does not yet appear to have had a definite and final answer.

4. Nuri Pasha informed me that Russian Ambassador, who was made acquainted by Afghan Ambassador with suggestion "Syria for the Syrians," expressed relief and approval.

5. Hungarian Minister here, who is also Minister in Baghdad, called on Nuri Pasha and informed him that Hitler's policy was one of Arabic independence and autonomy.

6. Nuri Pasha is extremely anxious as to possible penetration of German, Italian or other agents with subversive missions into Syria at the present moment. He is urging Turkish Government to be extremely cautious as to applications for passage through Turkey. I will support this.

(Repeated to Cairo, Baghdad and Beirut.)

E 2209/2170/89] No. 310

Sir H. Knatchbull-Hugessen to Viscount Halifax.—(Received June 29.)

(No. 660.)
(Telegraphic.) *Angora, June 28, 1940.*

NURI PASHA'S idea of "Syria for the Syrians" appears to be part [illegible] ference. He enlarged on this idea in conversation with me, suggesting some [illegible] this would be of great value to us as securing our position in Eastern Mediterranean, especially in the event of that position becoming impaired in Egypt as a result of the war.

(Repeated to Cairo, and to Baghdad, No. 272.)

E 2209 2170 89] No. 311

Sir H. Knatchbull Hugessen to Viscount Halifax.—(Received June 29.)

(No. 682.)
(Telegraphic.) *Angora, June 28, 1940*

NURI PASHA has summoned his consuls in Syria to Aleppo on his way back to Bagdad. He intends to instruct them to use the utmost of their influence to urge local elements to avoid action likely to create disturbance or disorder in present circumstances on the grounds that any such developments would be entirely to the advantage of Germany and Italy.

(Repeated to Aleppo, Beirut and Bagdad.)

E 2200 2170 89] No. 312

Viscount Halifax to Sir H. Knatchbull Hugessen (Angora).

No. 22
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June 29, 1940*

MY telegram No. 510 of 27th June: Syria and the Lebanon.

My immediately following telegram contains text of official statement which His Majesty's Government wish to put out in London at earliest possible moment.

2. Background is as follows. It is now clear that High Commissioner and Commander-in-chief have thrown in their hand, although there is just a possibility (on which, however, it would probably be unwise to rely) that an attempt at an actual German or Italian landing would be opposed. It is impossible to decide straight away how His Majesty's Government would act in a great variety of possible contingencies, and statement is intended to make it clear while they are considering their course of action, that they hold themselves free to do, and will do, whatever they think necessary for maintenance of their own position in Middle East. Meanwhile, you will have seen from Damascus telegram No. 19 [of 28th June] and Beirut telegram No. 23 [of 28th June] that an early occupation of the mandated territories by British forces might be welcome in those territories. It would probably also be welcome in other Arab circles. But there are many difficulties, military and otherwise, in the way of an immediate move, and, until these suggestions can be considered, the policy of His Majesty's Government must provisionally be taken to be that nothing should be done to make the difficulties of the French authorities any greater, even though [illegible] as this is the policy of His Majesty's Government, they hope that Turkish Government and Arab Governments will also refrain from making things more difficult. Practical measures, if any, which His Majesty's Government may think it possible and desirable to take to assist the French authorities in altered circumstances will now have to be considered. So will the attitude of His Majesty's Government towards such possibilities as the arrival (which might be possible through Turkey) of an Italian disarmament commission (although this is not, so far as I know, provided for in the armistice terms), wholesale release of German and Italian internees, any serious deterioration in the state of internal security, &c.

3. The declaration has been drafted so as to avoid constituting a promise or commitment to anybody. It is intended as a reservation of the right of His Majesty's Government [illegible] to Syria and the Lebanon. The last sentence is intended to cover the rights and interests of France. I realise that from this point of view it may not go as far as many Arabs might wish, but His Majesty's Government must move with caution, and do not feel able to go further at present.

4. As regards Turkish Government, I hope that the declaration will meet with their approval, and it is about this that I am chiefly anxious. You will realise that although Turkish co-operation in defence of Syria and the Lebanon might in certain circumstances be welcome to His Majesty's Government and ought to be equally welcome to the Arabs, the latter will inevitably always be suspicious of the entry of Turkish forces into those territories, no matter on what excuse. Nor is it likely that Turkey would render assistance without expecting a reward. It is of highest importance that nothing should be said now or hereafter

which would give slightest handle to propaganda that His Majesty's Govern[illegible] It follows, therefore, that, if the question of Anglo-Turkish co-operation arises [illegible] Arab attitude towards it will need delicate handling.

5. If you think it necessary, you may show this text to Turkish Government before replying, and give them general idea of lines on which His Majesty's Government are working. I rely upon you to use utmost discretion in regard to matters in preceding paragraph, though you may naturally express desire of His Majesty's Government to work in closest harmony with Turkish Government.

6. I hope that I shall receive your reply (which should be repeated to same [illegible] Broadcasting Corporation at 1 P.M. G.M.T., Monday, 1st July. If so, you yourself (if you have not already done so) and His Majesty's representatives in the other posts to which this telegram is reported should communicate its text at the same time to the Governments to which they are accredited and give it as much publicity as they like. If not, or if your reply suggests desirability of some modification, a fresh time will be communicated to you and other posts concerned [illegible] modifications will be suggested except on most imperative grounds.

(Repeated to Bagdad, No. 268; Jedda, No. 77; Cairo, No. 537; Jerusalem, No. 534; and Beirut, No. 29 (for Damascus).)

E 2200 2170 89] No. 313

Viscount Halifax to Sir H. Knatchbull Hugessen (Angora).

No. 23
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June 29, 1940*

MY immediately preceding telegram [of the 29th June: Syria and the Lebanon].

Following is text of proposed declaration:—

> "His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom understand that General Mittelhauser, the Commander-in-chief of the French forces in the Levant, has stated that hostilities have ceased in Syria. His Majesty's Government assume that this does not mean that, if Germany or Italy sought to occupy Syria or the Lebanon and were to try to do so in the face of British command of the sea, no attempt would be made by the French forces to oppose them. In order, however, to set at rest doubts which may be felt in any quarter, His Majesty's Government declare that they could not allow Syria or the Lebanon to be occupied by any hostile Power or to be used as a base for attacks upon those countries in the Middle East which they are pledged to defend, or to become the scene of such disorder as to constitute a danger to those countries. They therefore hold themselves free to take whatever measures they may in such circumstances consider necessary in their own interests. Any action which they may hereafter be obliged to take in fulfilment of this declaration will be entirely without prejudice to the future status of the territories now under French mandate."

(Repeated to Bagdad, No. 269; Jedda, No. 78; Cairo, No. 538; Jerusalem, No. [illegible]; Beirut, No. [illegible].)

E 2170 2170 89] No. 314

Mr. Gardener to Viscount Halifax.—(Received June 29.)

(No. 19.)
(Telegraphic.) *Damascus, June 28, 1940*

I AM of opinion that there would be very little risk and every chance of considerable gain by immediate despatch of a British force to Syria.

Force would not, I feel sure, meet with French opposition. This could be ascertained if you authorise it. On arrival of force large numbers of the French troops, who are now bewildered, would, on present indications, join it with their material. Arab opinion here expects such a move and a show of force would prevent opposition.

If necessary, occupation need not be permanent, but force could withdraw [illegible] supplies. Public order could then be assured by French troops who did not desire to join us.

Turkish Consul called on me this morning and asked whether such a move was contemplated. I replied that I had no information, but I gathered that the Turkish Government would welcome it.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 9, Jerusalem, No. 9, Beirut, No. 3, Angora and Aleppo, unnumbered.)

E 2209/2170/89] No. 315

Mr. Havard to Viscount Halifax.—(Received July 1.)

(No. 27.)
(Telegraphic.) *Beirut, July 1, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 28 [illegible] message. He was grateful for your appreciation. He told me that there was no word of the arrival of a disarmament commission, and that it might never materialise. He had received a telegram from the Pétain Government telling him that their policy was to carry on normal relations with His Majesty's Government.

2. High Commissioner is anxious about Syrian economic relations with Palestine, and hopes that means may be found for them to continue on a normal basis in view of the interdependence of both countries. He is thinking of sending a delegate to Jerusalem to discuss (group undecypherable).

3. Jones Military Mission is leaving.

(Repeated to Cairo, Jerusalem, Angora and Baghdad.)

E 2200/2170/89] No. 316

Sir H. Knatchbull Hugessen to Viscount Halifax.—(Received July 1.)

(No. 682.)
(Telegraphic.) *Angora, June 30, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 22.

I have seen Minister for Foreign Affairs, who agrees to proposed declaration.

2. I pointed out that we had previously agreed together that the most important point was to keep the Germans and Italians out of Syria and to support the French as far as possible. Minister for Foreign Affairs agreed. I then said that in the present circumstances the only course seemed to be for His Majesty's Government to take whatever measures were necessary and that I thought he would agree that Turkey had better leave it to us to do so, especially after his assurances to chargé d'affaires that Turkey had no ambitions in Syria (see my telegram No. 659). Minister for Foreign Affairs entirely agreed.

3. I emphasised provisional nature of measures contemplated.

(Repeated to Bagdad [illegible] able] and Damascus.)

E 2200/2170/89] No. 317

Sir R. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received July 1.)

(No. 308.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, June 30, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 523 to Angora and your telegram No. 27 to Beirut.

Declaration would, as drafted, help to allay anxiety about possible arrival of enemy forces in Syria and Lebanon, but omission of any reference at all to [illegible] would be exploited by extremists as evidence of our selfish disregard for their *sac*

rights of legitimate owners. It is important that Arabs, who will keenly await first sign of attitude of His Majesty's Government, should not be antagonised and that their sympathies should be, if possible, definitely enlisted on British side. I suggest therefore that, instead of last sentence of draft declaration, following should be substituted: "Should it become necessary to take action in fulfilment of this declaration, His Majesty's Government will, so far as may be possible, take into consideration wishes of peoples of Syria and Lebanon concerning present and future Government of their countries."

2. I would also suggest addition to penultimate sentence after words "in their own interest" of following words "and in those countries which they are pledged to defend."

3. I should explain that I am sending this at once in view of its urgency and that I have had no opportunity of taking soundings. Your telegram No. 522 to Angora, to which you refer, has not yet reached me.

4. I fear that latest decision of French authorities in Syria has taken most of the force out of advice which I have hitherto given here that nothing should be done to embarrass French, who were main bulwark against occupation by Axis Powers or Turkey. Seeing that French have been compelled by circumstances to sacrifice our interests to their own and furthermore, that position surrendered by France in Syria was created for them chiefly by British effort in last war, I suggest that His Majesty's Government are now entitled to put British interest [illegible] think French authorities could take legitimate [illegible] to above suggestions.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 112, Angora, No. 117, Jedda, No. 26, Jerusalem, No. 43, and Beirut (for Damascus), No. 110.)

E 2200/2170/89] No. 318

Viscount Halifax to Sir R. Newton (Baghdad).

(No. 275.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, July 1, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 308 [of 30th June: Syria and the Lebanon].

While attaching great weight to your views, I consider that declaration as originally drafted must stand.

(Repeated to Jedda, No. 81, Cairo, No. 549, Angora, No. 532, Beirut, No. 34, and Jerusalem, No. 545.)

E 2200/2070/89] No. 319

Text of Declaration regarding Syria and the Lebanon, made by His Majesty's Government on July 1, 1940.

HIS Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom understand that General Mittelhauser, the Commander-in-chief of the French forces in the Levant, has stated that hostilities have ceased in Syria. His Majesty's Government assume that this does not mean that, if Germany or Italy sought to occupy Syria or the [illegible] attempt would be made by the French forces to oppose them. In order, however, to set at rest doubts which may be felt in any quarter, His Majesty's Government declare that they could not allow Syria or the Lebanon to be occupied by any hostile Power or to be used as a base for attacks upon those countries in the Middle East which they are pledged to defend, or to become the scene of such disorder as to constitute a danger to those countries. They therefore hold themselves free to take whatever measures they may in such circumstances consider necessary in their own interests. Any action which they may hereafter be obliged to take in fulfilment of this declaration will be entirely without prejudice to the future status of the territories now under French mandate.

E 2227 2170 89] No. 320

Mr. Gardener to Viscount Halifax—(Received July 2.)

(No. 20.)
(Telegraphic.) *Damascus, July 2, 1940*

AT the request of the Iraq Minister for Foreign Affairs, I called on him late last night at the Iraqi Consulate-General, where the principal Syrian leaders had been with him since 1 p.m., when he arrived from Beirut.

2. All had heard on the radio His Majesty's Government's declaration regarding Syria, and all expressed the greatest pleasure thereat.

3. Nuri said neither he nor the Nationalists had any confidence in the French and were convinced that the French policy was to hand over Syria to Italy at any time even before the peace conference, hoping thus to lose the minimum of French colonies in North Africa and to [group omitted] Italy from Germany.

4. Nuri continued by saying that Syria would welcome British occupation without any declaration of ultimate independence. He added, in the event of occupation it would be preferable if His Majesty's Government could make a declaration to the effect that the occupation implied no prejudice to the future state of Syria, which must be determined by the peace conference.

5. I then read to Nuri a copy of the declaration. He asked whether His Majesty's Government considered that despatch of a disarmament commission or enemy consuls would be giving cause for occupation. I replied in the negative saying as I understood the declaration, His Majesty's Government did not wish to occupy Syria unless obliged to do so. I explained our occupation would mean distribution of our military force over wider area than originally intended, while from a political point of view, any occupation would give the Germans dangerous material for anti British propaganda in Arab States.

6. Nuri replied the British occupation would not be misunderstood in any [illegible] military necessity. He added that [illegible] of Mahommedans if His Majesty's [illegible] I replied that [illegible] prefer the sole [illegible]

[illegible] would wish [illegible] restrain Syrians from creating trouble by respecting present constituted authority as by doing so he would help the Arab cause and also His Majesty's Government, to this he seemed to agree.

8. Nuri then referred to Palestine, saying Shertok had sent him a message asking him to make peace between the Jews and Mahommedans. He said he would try to do so, as Mahommedans were prepared to accept the white paper policy provided they were given some assurance that after the war a definite date would be fixed for the transfer of Government to Palestinians.

9. [illegible] introduced me to Shukri Quwatly, late [illegible] as the dominant [illegible] ration with him. I [illegible]

[illegible]

E 2227 2170 89 No. 321

Mr. Gardener to Viscount Halifax—(Received July 3.)

(No. 21.)
(Telegraphic.) *Damascus, July 2, 1940*

AT his request I met Dr. Shahbandar this evening. He welcomed declaration and said that the British occupation would please Syrians. He asked [illegible] some declaration of ultimate Syrian independence but did not insist w[illegible] difficulties.

2. He [illegible]ly accepted my contention that British occupation was politically undesirable unless the situation deteriorated, and freely expressed readiness to [illegible] if after the war French did not grant liberty, he would resume his Nationalist campaign.

3. He said that enemy propaganda was now being actively conducted here being probably based on Iraq. He advocated active pro Ally propaganda campaign to combat it.

4. I am unable to confirm his statement, but I consider it probably correct. Organisation of such a campaign would probably arouse French suspicions and hostility, though Dr. [? Bandar] said he would be prepared to have a French nominated Arab on his committee as a guarantee of good faith.

5. If the proposed campaign is judged expedient to combat [illegible] future enemy propaganda, it might seem officially be possible to persuade dele[illegible] here to tolerate it unofficially provided that it was conducted with discretio[illegible]

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 11; Jerusalem, No. 11, and Baghdad and Beirut Saving.)

E 2227 2170 89] No. 322

Mr. Gardener to Viscount Halifax—(Received July 4.)

(No. 22.)
(Telegraphic.) *Damascus, July 3, 1940*

I LEARN from an authoritative source that French are perturbed at Nuri's arrival and actions here. He at first planned to meet Iraqi Consuls in Syria together with Jamil Mardam Nationalists at Aleppo. This the French opposed so meeting took place at Damascus after Nuri had paid courtesy visit to French High Commissioner at Beirut.

2. French consider it most unfortunate that Nuri met only Jamil Mardam Nationalists (whom they greatly distrust), omitting Dr. Shahbandar, whose following is at least as large and certainly more sincerely pro Ally. They do not know if he was excluded by Nuri's orders or through intrigue of Iraqi Consul General here. Bahij Bey head of the present Syrian Government was also not given the opportunity to see Nuri. This attention shown to a party who are a gang of intriguers, of whom three or four members are deeply suspected to have [illegible] good order.

3. (Secret.) Some circles here have apparently urged High Commissioner to meet situation by (a) making declaration promising ultimate Syrian independence and (b) making some change in present form of government. So far High Commissioner is reported to have refused both suggestions. I personally am inclined to think such a change is at this stage unnecessary and probably dangerous.

4. My informant also stated Nuri had obtained approval of the Turkish Government to ultimate union of Syria and Iraq.

5. Meanwhile, I suggest, if possible, Nuri should be warned of situation brought about, and in the interest of stability, be asked to instruct Iraqi Consul General not to push Jamil Mardam party so enthusiastically and exclusively.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 12; Jerusalem, No. 12; Baghdad, Angora and Beirut, Saving.)

E 2227 2170 89 No. 323

Mr Stonehewer-Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received July 4.)

No. 132
(Telegraphic) *Jedda, July 4, 1940*

YOUR telegram No. 80.

I received message in time to advise Amir Faisal of the h[illegible] when the statement of His Majesty's Government's policy was to be broadcast. I subsequently sought an interview and handed His Highness a translation of the statement.

2. Amir had, he said, heard broadcast—he found it reassuring, but wished to speak personally to make one criticism: the declaration mentioned attempt by hostile Power to occupy Syria, it did not speak of attempt by other Powers. I replied that to phrase the declaration in terms he had in mind would surely have amounted to admission that His Majesty's Government contemplated the possibility of attempted Turkish occupation. As His Highness would remember I had only a few days before been instructed to reassure Saudi Arabian Government on this point.

3. There is no doubt that Ibn Saud still harbours suspicions of Turkey. The King Amir told me he is also worrying over Nuri Pasha's visit to Angora and [illegible] Arabic solidarity Nuri Pasha should have given him more information about his [illegible] he was about to leave Angora. Ibn S[illegible] not allow any decision to be taken in support of Turkey and Iraq prejudicial to the interests of any of the Arabic States. I told the Amir that Ibn Saud's confidence was well placed.

(Repeated to Bagdad, No. 39, Cairo, No. 44, and Angora.)

E 2227 2170 89] No. 324

Mr Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received July 5.)

(No. 133.)
(Telegraphic.) *Jedda, July 4, 1940*

MY immediately preceding telegram.

Ibn Saud's suspicions of Turkey. I had not at the time of my interview with the Amir Faisal received Angora telegram No. 682.

Is there any objection to my informing Ibn Saud that Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs has assured Nuri Pasha that Turkey has no ambitions in Syria?

E 2209 2170 89] No. 325

Mr Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received July 5.)

(No. 134.)
(Telegraphic.) *Jedda, July 4, 1940*

MY telegram No. 121.

Ibn Saud, in reply to my note, expresses thanks for this statement on the Syrian problem and wishes to assure me that he will take no action which could embarrass His Majesty's Government.

He begs His Majesty's Government to keep him fully informed of all developments.

(Repeated to Bagdad, No. 40, and Cairo, No. 45.)

E 2240 2170 89] No. 326

Viscount Halifax to Mr Havard (Beirut).

(No. 42.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, July 5, 1940*

THE French Government have asked some at least of British consular officers in North Africa to leave within twenty-four hours.

2. Whether or not such a request has been received by consular officers in Syria and Lebanon, you should seek an interview with the High Commissioner and inform h[illegible] to show very deep regret, they had to take against the French fleet in order to prevent it falling into enemy hands. His Majesty's Government are still anxious to maintain friendly relations with the French authorities in Syria, and are proposing, as a result of his Excellency's appeal for the maintenance of commercial relations with Palestine, shortly to make practical sugg[illegible] to him in order to tide over this difficult period. It could only cause difficulties and embarrassments to both parties if, after all these years of loyal co-operation, relations were to be broken off between them in the Middle East, and you have been instructed to urge with all earnestness that the High Commissioner should not take any drastic action without the fullest consideration.

3. If the atmosphere is suitable you may add that difficulties of his position are fully understood by His Majesty's Government, and say that their offer of financial assistance has never been withdrawn and may still be open (although you should know, for your own information, that His Majesty's Government would expect tangible return in form of friendly conduct for any such assistance).

4. His Majesty's Ambassador at Bagdad and the High Commissioner at Jerusalem, to whom this telegram is being repeated, may be able to take action along similar lines with French representatives there.

(Repeated to Jerusalem, No. 507, and Bagdad, No. [illegible])

E 2227 2170 89] No. 327

Sir R. Bullard to Viscount Halifax.—(Received July 5.)

(No. 221.)
(Telegraphic.) *Tehran, July 5, 1940*

ACCORDING to the Iraqi Chargé d'Affaires, the Minister for Foreign Affairs stated to him that anything would be better than to have the Italians in Syria, whether it remained under the French or came under the Turks or British.

E 2240 2170 89] No. 328

Mr. Havard to Viscount Halifax.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 35.)
(Telegraphic.) *Beirut, July 6, 1940*

YOUR telegram No. 42.

I saw the French High Commissioner early this morning and informed him of the attitude of His Majesty's Government towards Syria in the sense of paragraph 2.

He was most appreciative and asked me to tell you that the sentiments therein expressed tallied exactly with his own. The latest instructions from his [illegible] avoid complications or difficulties arising between Syria and neighbouring countries. In view of your message the High Commissioner would now ask the French Government to allow him a certain measure of latitude for dealing with affairs concerning Syria and neighbouring countries.

2. In view of the frank and friendly atmosphere, I informed the High Commissioner of the additional message contained in the third paragraph of your telegram under reference.

(Repeated to Jerusalem and Bagdad.)

E 2242 2170 89] No. 329

Mr Gardener to Viscount Halifax.—(Received July 6.)

(No 25.)
(Telegraphic.) *Damascus, July 6, 1940*

MY telegrams Nos 20 and 21

Dr Shahbandar has just been assassinated. Presumably the murder was instigated by Jamil Mardam party, though there is no proof. Motive would be the desire of that party to promote trouble at once, a policy opposed by Shahbandar. Blame will be ascribed to French and British.

2. French are making immediate military dispositions to meet expected [illegible]

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 15, Jerusalem, No. 14, Baghdad, Angora and Beirut.)

E 2227 2170 89] No. 330

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received July 7.)

(No 232.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, July 6, 1940*

DAMASCUS telegram No. 22 to you.

I mentioned to the Minister for Foreign Affairs on 6th July unfortunate impression left on the minds of French authorities by the fact that he seemed to have had contact only with Jamil Mardam's party.

2. He explained that he had sought out those who might be disposed to take precipitate action and had urged them to keep quiescent. He did not agree the French estimate of the importance of Dr Shahbandar, but said that, in any case, it would have been unnecessary to give such advice to him or to Bahij Bey. Nuri had been pressed for time and had not been aware that latter wanted to see him.

3. The delegate at Damascus had been present at one of his meetings with Syrians, and Nuri had thought he was fully aware of the tenor that he had given to them.

(Repeated to Damascus.)

E 2240 2170 89] No. 331

Mr Havard to Viscount Halifax.—(Received July 9.)

(No. 40.)
(Telegraphic.) *Beirut, July 9, 1940*

YOUR telegram No. 42, third paragraph.

It may be useful at this stage to stress the exceptionally unfavourable economic situation of French Mandated territories at the present time and extent of their dependence on the goodwill of His Majesty's Government and surrounding countries.

2. According to reliable information, the present stocks of the following articles of absolute necessity, all of which must be imported, are sufficient for less than two months: coal, petrol, kerosene, rice, sugar, condensed milk, spare parts for cars, medicine and industrial chemicals.

3. Owing to drastic restrictions of the grant of import licences during the [illegible] few months (see my telegram No. 9) stocks of many other articles of importance are low.

4. Greater part of all these commodities must be paid for in sterling or Allied currencies, in view of interruption of maritime communications with France, even if the latter could supply, which is unlikely.

5. I understand that local currency commands little or no confidence outside the country, owing to the disappearance or freezing of gold backing and other securities formerly in Banque de France. Syrian pounds are practically unacceptable, *e.g.* in Palestine. Essential francs can therefore only be obtained (*a*) by barter, or (*b*) by provision of sterling credits by His Majesty's Government.

6. Harvest this year is reported good, and the country will have surplus cereals, which the High Commission hope to dispose of in Palestine or Greece.

Latter possibility depends on blockade not being enforced by the Royal Navy as a result of detention of British ships at Beirut (my telegram to the Commander-in-Chief, Mediterranean, repeated to you as No. 38). Country may also hope to dispose of exportable surplus olive oil, eggs, tobacco, leather, wool, cotton and potatoes, but chiefly in Palestine, and perhaps other neighbouring countries. Estimates I have received suggest that even with planned economy ensuring minimum imports and maximum exports difference between the values of f[illegible] and of the latter may be £2 million sterling per annum. Such planned economy is in any case unlikely of fulfilment with the present officials in charge. Difference may therefore well prove greater.

7. Position regarding petrol, kerosene and gas oil is particularly serious as not only are the existing stocks sufficient for less than a month, but two principal companies—Shell and Socony—are both extremely unwilling to import even against sterling cash unless satisfactory arrangement is made by the French [illegible] purchases since outbreak of war.

(Repeat to Jerusalem and Cairo. Copy by bag to Damascus.)

E 2227 2170 89] No. 332

Viscount Halifax to Mr Gardener (Damascus).

No. 18.)
Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, July 9, 1940*

YOUR telegrams Nos. 20, 21 and 22 (of 2nd and 3rd July). Political [illegible]

I am inclined to agree with criticism of General Nuri's behaviour. Only [illegible] Officers (but not Nationalist leaders) to meet him at Aleppo in order to urge discretion upon them. If you think it desirable you may inform the French authorities in sense of preceding sentence.

2. [illegible]

3. [illegible] do so. [illegible] that they might [illegible] intervene in Syria. You should, therefore, lose no opportunity of urging upon [illegible] the French [illegible]

4. [illegible]

5. Pa[illegible] No. 21 [illegible] of propaganda [illegible]

6. Please communicate to Beirut.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 589, Jedda, No. 80, Baghdad, No. 296; and Jerusalem, No. 575.)

E 2227 2170 89] No. [illegible]

Viscount Halifax to Mr. Stonehewer Bird (Jedda)

(No. 86.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, July 9, 1940*

YOUR telegrams Nos. 132 and 133 (of 4th July: Syria).

You may inform Ibn Saud that General Nuri told His Majesty's Ambassador at Angora that after his conversations he was entirely satisfied as to Turkish imperialistic ambitions. He was convinced they had no designs on Mosul or Syria.

2. As regards declaration, this is not a promise to anybody, and even if word "hostile" had been omitted it would not have meant that His Majesty's Government had undertaken to defend Syria against Turkey or any other Power.

Repeated to Baghdad No. 301, Angora No. 57, [illegible] Beirut (for Damascus) No. 44, and Jerusalem No. 580.

E 2262 2170 89] No. 334

Mr. Havard to Viscount Halifax.—(Received July 14.)

(No. 49.)
(Telegraphic.) *Beirut, July 14, 1940*

FOLLOWING is general appreciation of present situation in this country as seen from here:—

2. I understand that General Mittelhauser is to hand over his command to General Laugère. Admiral Carpentier, whose two years of command has expired, has handed over to Admiral Conton.

3. Attitude of the senior officials is now one of complete subserviency to [illegible] el amongst subordinates [illegible] ch optimism favourable to [illegible]

4. [illegible] British news is still given prominence beside the P[illegible] communiqués. Arab press is, however, being allowed and perhaps encou[illegible] to print occasional tendentious articles, and British propaganda has been almost [illegible] B[illegible] barely heard, though Jerusalem French broadcasts are excellent and are clearly heard. Nevertheless, large preponderance of news from French sources is not without effect on French opinion generally.

5. Army has not yet been demobilised, though this is likely to start soon. [illegible] into Palestine. At present I consider it could with difficulty be persuaded to march against the British, even if this were contemplated, but would resist, on orders, any British attempt at incursion.

6. Local population leaders passive but still hoping for British interference with consequent relief from imminent economic distress. They seem, however, to realise that French control of internal situation has again tightened up.

7. My relations with authorities are still friendly, and whilst sometimes obstructive and always suspicious of British intrigue in Syria, French will probably continue to do what they can to maintain atmosphere of co-operation so long as they have hope of economic assistance from His Majesty's Government [group undecypherable] Palestine, imperative need for which they are coming to realise. Whilst they will meekly accept any orders from Pétain Government they will probably try as far as they dare to minimise any adverse effects should they [group undecypherable] on British interests here.

[illegible] ment undergo further marked deterioration I see no present reason why British subjects should not visit or continue to reside in this country.

(Repeated to Cairo, Baghdad, Angora, and Jerusalem, Saving.)

E 2285 2170 89] No. 335

Sir M. Lampson to Viscount Halifax.—(Received July 14.)

(No. 720.)
(Telegraphic.) *Cairo, July 14, 1940*

FAISAL, son of late Shah Bandar, called on oriental secretary and made the following statement:—

2. [illegible] i, Iraqi Chargé d'Affaires here, who has suddenly left [illegible] s improbable in view of his recent arrival, is [illegible] imposed in agreement with [illegible], it is thought, after discus[illegible] dum exposes what may be exp[illegible] from the British Government according to their declarations, what may be expected from Germany according to their open and secret declarations, and what line Syro Palestinians in question suggest should be taken regarding Syria. Line suggested was that National Congress should be formed and declare the independence of Syria which should at once be recognised by the Arab States and Egypt. Adnan al Atassi, son of ex President of Syrian Republic and attached to the French Consulate here, declared that from his conversations with the French Minister he gathered that the French, in view of their weakness, will not oppose this declaration of independence. Adnan al Atassi is to follow Tahsin al Askari to Damascus shortly.

3. There had already been discussions with the Government of Aly Maher, which had agreed to recognise Syrian independence when declared, and the present Government when sounded had intimated that it would follow the [illegible]

4. [illegible] al Askari, who had been in telephonic communication with Nuri, would probably go on to Baghdad from Damascus.

5. Faisal begged for guidance as to the attitude which Shah Bandar party should assume. It naturally did not wish to dissociate itself from a comprehensive national movement.

6. I presume that we need not be more French than the French, and that if they agree to Syrian independence we are not going to put ourselves in the wrong with the Arabs by opposing it.

7. What reply should be given to Faisal?

(Repeated to Damascus, No. 11, and Baghdad, No. 41.)

E 2240 2170 89] No. 336

Viscount Halifax to Mr. Havard (Beirut).

(No. 53.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, July 19, 1940*

YOUR telegram No. 49 [of 14th July: Syria].

Position as I see it in light of your telegrams Nos. 35 and 40 [of 6th and 9th July] and other reports is as follows:—

[illegible] ment, both for access to markets and for imports of essential products.

(2) The collapse of France must mean that financial position of the French mandatory authorities will become serious unless they can obtain funds from His Majesty's Government.

(3) Demobilisation of French forces from whatever cause must mean that French position would be insecure if His Majesty's Government were to cease to restrain Arab nationalists, and might become untenable, in spite of French forces, if His Majesty's Government were to give nationalists active encouragement.

2. All this seems to give His Majesty's Government strong lever over French authorities.

3. On the other hand, it is most important for His Majesty's Government that Syria and Lebanon shall not be used to hamper their war effort. Moreover Palestine Government are anxious that their supply position shall not be

complicated by cessation of imports from these territories. To secure these desiderata His Majesty's Government are prepared to give French authorities political assistance in maintaining their position and sympathetic consideration to requests for economic or financial help.

4. It is obviously impossible for His Majesty's Government to define in advance all the points on which they would expect French co-operation. So far as can be foreseen, however, their immediate requirements can be summarised as follows, it being understood that they might make additional requests from time to time but would not press demands inconsistent with the position of the French administration as the controlling authority in Syria and the Lebanon:—

(a) French authorities should, in the event of attack by Germany or Italy, [illegible] instructions they may receive from the Vichy Government offer maximum resistance in their power and accept any help which His Majesty's Government may be able to offer.

(b) French authorities should in no circumstances, even if relations between His Majesty's Government and Vichy Government deteriorate, engage in or tolerate any form of anti British subversive activity or propaganda. They should allow no enemy agents of any kind, whether German and Italian officials, or otherwise, to operate in or from or to travel through Syria and the Lebanon. Great importance is attached to this point. You will have seen from Jerusalem telegram No. 659 (of 13th July) to the Colonial Office that authorities in Palestine propose to tighten up frontier control. This is no doubt desirable in any case, but action on these lines, even if taken by Iraqi Government also, will not solve whole problem.

(c) French authorities should maintain order, and, in doing so, take due account of the susceptibilities of Arab opinion elsewhere.

(d) Trade between the mandated territories and Palestine should be encouraged by every possible means.

(e) French authorities should recognise the vital necessity for the contraband control requirements of His Majesty's Government, which have now been extended to cover Metropolitan France and North Africa, and should place no obstacles in the way of their execution. In particular, no attempt should be made to send existing stocks of crude oil to any destination where they might fall into enemy hands.

(f) Communications, in particular railway traffic, between Syria and the Lebanon and neighbouring countries should be kept open for through traffic. (N.B. Any threat to railway might compel Turkish Government to occupy Aleppo and Jezirah.)

(g) Necessary facilities for work of His Majesty's Consular Officers should be afforded (see your telegrams Nos. 44 [of 12th July] and 45 [of 13th July]).

(h) Reasonable facilities should be afforded for presentation by His Majesty's Government of their own case through press, &c., it being understood that their propaganda would not be directed against France or the French authorities (see your telegram No. 51 [of 16th July]).

(i) Ships now held at Beirut should be released under a mutual exchange agreement in general on a ton-to-ton basis (see your telegram No. 38 [of 8th July]).

5. I [illegible] to Angora that High [illegible] is personal feelings, he would have [illegible] This attitude seems based [illegible] His Majesty's Government cannot [illegible] such help unless the Fren[illegible]

6. As a matter of fact His Majesty's Government are anxious to maintain working relations with Vichy Government. These might well be compromised if they were to get impression that His Majesty's Government were asking High Commissioner to ignore their instructions. But His Majesty's Government do not ask this. His relations with Vichy are his own affair. They ask for results and their help would continue—

(i) So long as results were forthcoming, and
(ii) In proportion to those results.

7. Point (ii) is important, because I also recognise that desiderata in paragraph 4 are in some ways counsels of perfection, and that the French authorities [illegible] not be able, even if they were willing, to give His Majesty's Government satisfaction in every respect.

8. You should also bear in mind that nothing would suit His Majesty's Government less than to have to create disorder in mandated territories, *e.g.*, by [illegible] weapon (3) in paragraph 4, and they would probably only do so if active French hostility left them no other choice whatever.

9. Subject, however, to your views and those of High Commissioner for Palestine, I shall be glad if you will now sound High Commissioner as to possibility of reaching a friendly and mutually satisfactory understanding. It is not my intention that you should necessarily present points in paragraph 4 as a series of demands about which His Majesty's Government expect immediate assurances. On the contrary, you may think it desirable to work up to more difficult demands gradually, endeavouring first to create a friendly atmosphere, such as may be possible if economic discussions (see Jerusalem telegrams Nos. 659 and 662 [of 13th July] to Colonial Office) are successful. Moreover, if High Commissioner is unresponsive, this undesirable, if only because of consideration in paragraph 8, [illegible] therefore be to ascertain whether the basis for an understanding exists, and I leave you full discretion as to manner and language of your approach. If His Majesty's Government can once get him committed to accepting their help, they may thereafter be able to carry him along step by step until he is no longer in a position to avoid complying with the more stringent of their requirements.

10. Particular difficulty must clearly be expected with regard to point (a) in paragraph 4, and I think that, if you mention it at all in early stages, it should be as one which you know to be exercising the mind of His Majesty's Government, [illegible] for which they may wish to press, although they realise the awkward problems which it would arouse on the French side. His Majesty's Government would not, in any case, place much faith in promise of French authorities to resist. What is essential is that those authorities shall not, if the case arises, impede any resistance which His Majesty's Government might find themselves able to make.

11. For your own information:—

(1) In return for really satisfactory conduct, His Majesty's Government would be willing to provide exchange up to £150,000 a month. You will remember that His Majesty's Government were willing to provide £100,000 a week, to include subsidy for payments to army, when there was a possibility of securing in return services of a first-class fighting force. This possibility apparently no longer exists and the amount of the army subsidy may now be excluded. Even so, His Majesty's Government are prepared to make a valuable concession to obtain security on their northern flank, and figure of £150,000 a month represents a very liberal maximum, which may only be attained in exceptional circumstances. You will observe that this figure is related to figure of £2 million per annum mentioned in paragraph 6 of your telegram No. 40 [of 9th July].

(2) Although a complete blockade of Syrian and Lebanese coasts could not be initiated straight away, a fairly effective blockade could be instituted at short notice.

12. Please inform Damascus.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 646, Baghdad, No. 331, Angora, No. 626, Jedda, No. 94, and Jerusalem, No. 612.)

E 2285 2170/89] No. 337

Viscount Halifax to Sir M Lampson (Cairo)

(No 654)
(Telegraphic) *Foreign Office, July 21 1940*

YOUR telegram No. 720 (of the 14th July - Syria)

I suspect that these persons are more optimistic about chances of securing independence for Syria than are those resident in the country

2. If National Congress meets in Syria with (of approval) [illegible] authorities, there should be no danger of its decisions being objected [illegible] point of view of His Majesty's Government. They would indeed welcome [illegible] ons to reasonable Arab opinion to which French authorities may agree. On the other hand unless experience shows (which I hope it will not) that it is impossible to maintain tolerably friendly relations with French authorities His Majesty's Government cannot take part in manœuvres to wring independence for Syria from them against their wishes. Similarly unless events force His Majesty's Government to abandon all hope of co-operation with the French authorities, they must do everything in their power to dissuade their Arab friends from making position of French authorities more difficult than it is already

3. You should, therefore, take any action which you may consider necessary to dissuade Egyptian Government from giving their support to any subversive organisation in Syria. Please see in this connexion my telegram No. 295 to Baghdad (of the 9th July)

4. I do not know how much influence Faisal Shahbandar possesses, but I see no harm in oriental secretary pointing out to him that French authorities have declared their intention of maintaining their position in the mandated territories and that, before embarking on any political schemes, it would seem only prudent for him to ascertain what their reaction would be

(Repeated to Angora No 634 Baghdad No. 333 Jedda No. 99 Beirut No 54 (for Damascus), and Jerusalem No 620)

E 2227 2170 89] No. 338

Viscount Halifax to Mr Stonehewer-Bird (Jedda)

No. 101
(Telegraphic) *[illegible] July 21 1940*

[illegible] adopt the line that, [illegible] Arab States, all of whom [illegible] become of special [illegible] form of governm[illegible] [illegible] consider it therefore, support of His [illegible] French authorities or people of Syria [illegible] they would probably reply that they could [illegible] Ibn Saud, Emir Abdullah and Regent [illegible] As this line would no doubt make it very [illegible] it might also have to be made clear at som[illegible] of these three rulers w[illegible]

[illegible]

E 2318 2170 89] No. 339

Mr Hacard to Viscount Halifax.—(Received July 31)

(No. 66)
(Telegraphic) *Beirut, July 31, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 53. On 29th July I discussed all points raised by you. Discussion was frank and cordial, but whilst M Puaux left me in no doubt as to his personal sentiments, which he expressed frankly in words "every true Frenchman can but hope for a British victory," he was equally frank in stating that he would submit to all orders from Vichy. At the same time he gave me to understand that he would seek from Vichy as few instructions as possible in the hope that he would be left alone to carry on administration of these territories as unobtrusively as possible. He said that for the time being neither Axis partner had time to think about Syria, and it was to our mutual advantage to do nothing to bring Syria into limelight. Referring to your telegram under reference by paragraphs —

(1) High Commissioner fully realised this and counts on clearing agreement with Palestine and perhaps also on similar arrangements with Egypt and Iraq to overcome existing difficulties. As regards financial position it would seem that there is no shortage of Syrian currency to enable Administration to carry on for some months. So far only soldiers conscripted in neighbouring countries of the Levant have been demobilised. Rest of demobilisation must take place in France, but no transport is available and no date for demobilisation is fixed

(3) High Commissioner will of his own volition do nothing to hamper war effort of His Majesty's Government, negotiations for clearing agreement with Palestine are actually under discussion in Beirut and pending its conclusion perishable goods are again going free into Palestine. As regards economic help, High Commissioner mentioned blocking of balance of original £200,000 exchange and I gave him explanation contained in your telegram No. 0057. I added that His Majesty's G[illegible] and if it were really friendly would be prepared to help it materially. He then informed me that he had heard that sterling credits Banque Syrie had also been blocked.

4) (a) In discussing this High Commissioner said that fortunately such an attack could not take place, since there was no way open to Italians or Germans. Could it conceivably happen it would seemingly be in contravention of terms of armistice and in absence of orders would be resisted. He added in answer to my further question that he could not imagine Vichy Government agreeing to it.

(b) As reported in my telegram No 56 a section of Arabic press has been publishing anti-British articles, and I again drew High Commissioner's attention to this and said that in view of censorship of press I could but conclude that censorship authorities connived at spreading such sentiments. I added that Beirut French broadcaster, who is also censor, was often at fault in suppressing certain facts, such as who torpedoed the *Meknes* and who saved thousand odd lives, whereas he stressed the point that neither Vichy nor Germans were informed in advance of date of sailing or of ports of departure or arrival. I added that I considered this attitude on the part of M Chambard distinctly unfriendly. High Commissioner promised to instruct Chambard to change his attitude and to take more care about what was published in Arabic press. [illegible] as to whether he would prevent German and [illegible] coming here, he said it was unusual for such [illegible] country until a peace treaty had been s[illegible] not provide for return of consular or other [illegible] if question arose Vichy would have to decide [illegible] this point and said that H[illegible] of a situation which wo[illegible] ries. High Commissioner [illegible] Government had assured French [illegible] commission wished to come here by way o[illegible]

[illegible] is in the interests of his own [illegible] opinion. He added he had for a [illegible] to power in Damascus, but had

decided it was best to deal with Arab aspirations [illegible] when war was finished. He complained of meddlesomeness of Nuri and asked whether we could not influence him to stop his present interference in Syrian affairs. He also mentioned two Palestinians at present here who were meddling in Syria [illegible] and said he would have a warning conveyed to them. He did not think [illegible] would be a nuisance if outsiders would not meddle.

(d) This point had High Commissioner's wholehearted approval and he added when he heard my complaint a few days ago that his economic adviser had stopped Syrian produce from going to Palestine (my telegram No. 62), he had the matter put right.

(e) High Commissioner quite realised this and said there was no chance, so long as we controlled the sea, of any crude oil falling into enemy hands. He said he hoped to be able to [group undecipherable] this oil by some amateur process for local use.

(f) High Commissioner fully endorsed this, and in a tentative draft letter covering Syrian Palestinian Clearing Agreement, he mentioned necessity of so doing.

(g) There is, in fact, no hindrance to this.

(h) There was a certain difficulty over this point. High Commissioner taking the view that normal foreign representatives did not have press offices in neutral countries, but that their side of the case was presented by local news agencies. I did not wish to argue this point too far at present, but rather to wait and see the result of my complaints under (b) above. French and Arabic broadcasts from Jerusalem, Cairo and London are listened to widely, and I doubt whether our press office could usefully add much, even if we could get it published.

(i) I told High Commissioner that, in my opinion, question of detained ships spoilt our relations, and I asked whether he could not get Vichy to agree to an exchange. I pointed out to him that normal and only satisfactory way of getting petrol supplies from Haifa was by sea, but that this was impossible so long as the French authorities maintained their order to keep three British ships here. He replied that he realised the importance of getting these ships freed and of fixing up some *modus vivendi* for the future, but Vichy seemed obdurate and Admiral Carpentier had been severely scolded for having agreed to an exchange without the consent of Vichy. He, however, realised its importance and said he would think over ways and means of again presenting a proposal to his Govern[illegible] that if we could get this question of ships cleared up we should go a long way towards getting back to a state of normal relations.

(5) I put the point to High Commissioner that he might find himself unable to discharge his mission at some given time without help from His Majesty's Government, and whether in that case he would put the case bluntly to Vichy; he avoided a direct reply, but said Vichy did not seem to wish to be bothered with Syria, and he himself did not wish to bother Vichy. He had some time ago asked for a certain [? discretion] to carry on; this had not been turned down, and he took it for granted that he could exercise a certain liberty of action in so far as his administrative duties were concerned.

The above covers all points raised. I would only add that High Commissioner does not appear to have any great influence at Vichy and that Vichy would appear to have little time to devote to Syria.

(Repeated to Cairo, Bagdad, Angora, Jedda and to Jerusalem and Damascus, Saving.)

E 2396/2170/89] No. 340

Mr. Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received August 13.)

(No. 160.)
(Telegraphic.) *Jedda, August 12, 1940.*

R[illegible] telegram No. 60 to you, paragraph 4 (c).

I have received from Ibn Saud the following message:

(1) Yusuf Yasin reports from Bagdad that Iraqi Government propose to advise the French Government to form National Government in Syria, pointing out that the failure to do so may impair their relations with the Arab Powers and may lead to the cutting off by Iraq of petroleum and other supplies, and to request the Egyptian Government to take similar action.

(2) Note in the above sense has been sent to Iraqi M[illegible] instructions not to deliver it pending Ibn S[illegible] approval. When Ibn Saud has approved His M[illegible] is to be so informed and note handed to Vichy Gover[illegible].

(3) Ibn Saud has replied, stating that in his opinion Vichy G[illegible] puppets of Germany and can take no independent action in [illegible]. In any case, before taking any action, he wishes to consult His Majesty's Government, and is of opinion that the Iraqi Government should for their part also elicit the views of His Maje[illegible] ment. Only when these are known is Ibn Saud pre[illegible] what joint action can be taken.

(4) Ibn Saud, in conclusion, begs for an urgent expression of your Lordship's opinion in order that he may know what final reply to give the Iraqi Government.

I have thanked Ibn Saud and expressed appreciation of his attitude.

(Repeated to Cairo (for M.E.C.), No. 60; Bagdad, No. 51; Angora, N[illegible]; Jerusalem, No. 44; Beirut, No. 3.)

E 2467/2170/89] No. 341

Mr. Gardener to Viscount Halifax.—(Received August 20.)

(No. 35.)
(Telegraphic.) *Damascus, August 19, 1940.*

Dr. SHAHBANDAR'S son and brother-in-law called on me this morning.

They said that the party was extremely dissatisfied with the dilatoriness of the French in tracing real instigators of the assassination. They claimed that the murderers and intermediaries had been traced through the party's efforts, but that the French had wilfully neglected to extract legal proof from the intermediaries.

Brother-in-law said that if the French did not press the investigation more thoroughly many members of the party were in favour of armed revolt against the French, in which Druze would participate.

[illegible] blame us, and which would arouse the Arabic world, forcing His Majesty's Government to take sides.

If you approve I suggest Shahbandar's partisan [? s] might be requested to give similar advice.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 19; Jerusalem, No. 27; Bagdad; Angora; Jedda; Beirut, No. 6.)

E 2467/2170/89] No. 342

Viscount Halifax to Mr. Gardener (Damascus).

(No. 25.)
(Telegraphic.) R *Foreign Office, August 24, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 35 (of 19th August: Assassination of Dr. Shahbander).

I think it advisable that His Majesty's Government should be involved as [illegible] to us as because it would in all probability prove disastrous for its instigators) and recommend as sympathetically as possible that any grievances should be taken up in the normal way with the French authorities.

(Repeated to Angora, No. 526; Bagdad, No. 435; Cairo, No. 647; Jedda, No. 133; and Jerusalem, No. 755.)

E 2521/2170/89] No. 343

Consul-General Havard to Viscount Halifax.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 104.)
(Telegraphic.) *Beirut, August 28, 1940.*

ITALIAN Military Mission arrived to-day and is staying at hotel in Beirut. It consists of General Federici de Giorgis, Colonels Tavazzani and Bardella, Tagliere, former Vice-Consul at Tripoli (Lebanon), two couriers and five military servants.

(Repeated to Cairo (for general officer commanding), Jerusalem, Angora, Bagdad, Jedda and Commander-in-chief, Mediterranean.)

E 2540/2120/89] No. 344

Consul-General Havard to Viscount Halifax.—(Received September 1.)

(No. 112.)
(Telegraphic.) *Beirut, August 31, 1940.*

My telegram No. 104.

German Armistice Commission is shortly sending German, named Rudolph Roser, to this country in order to ascertain whether Germans formally interned have been released and given facilities for leaving if they wish.

2. I understand that further Italian Commission, including former Italian Consul-General and Vice-Consul at Beirut and possibly the Consul at Damascus, is shortly arriving.

(Repeated to Cairo, Angora, Bagdad and Jerusalem, Saving.)

E 2541/2170/89 No. 345

Mr. Havard to Viscount Halifax.—(Received September 1.)

(No. 113.)
(Telegraphic.) *Beirut, August 31, 1940.*

ON the 30th August French High Commissioner broadcast from Beirut radio speech exhorting the population of this country to economy in consumption as a [illegible] the Iraqi Petroleum Company to erect refinery there despite repeated requests. He then stated that, although alleged agreement had been negotiated with Palestine, His Majesty's Government had refused to consent, thus subordinating the normal exchanges between Palestine and Syria to settlement of the maritime dispute born of aggression against the French fleet. It had seemed permissible to hope that His Majesty's Government, in the interest of the Arab population of the Near East, would not raise such economic barriers, but, on the contrary, economic pressure seemed about to be generalised, for when the High Commission had turned to Iraq they had been told that the petrol there belonged not to the Government but to British companies, which disposed of it as they liked.

Syrians and Lebanese must understand that if the blockade appeared to be a process of imposition round their frontiers France, which had always shown itself favourable to free exchanges throughout Arabic countries, was in no way responsible. His Majesty's Government had, it was true, now authorised export of limited quantity of petrol, but the question of principle remained unsolved and the population must prepare for further restrictions.

[illegible] reactions to this [illegible]

(Repeated to Cairo, Angora, Bagdad and Jerusalem.)

E 2541/2170/89] No. 346

Mr. Havard to Viscount Halifax.—(Received September 3.)

(No. 115.)
(Telegraphic.) *Beirut, September 2, 1940.*

My telegram No. 113.

Following seem to be reactions to the High Commissioner's broadcast:

1. Educated classes of the population consider it petulant and childish and as a very poor attempt to cloak shortcomings of French Administration. It has done nothing to raise dwindling French prestige, but has merely served to show up lack of foresight in providing for supply of essential commodities.

2. Lower classes appear divided, some blaming French for present restrictions, whilst others take the view that local population should not be made to suffer for a Franco-British quarrel, and that, although the present plight of the population is due to bad administration in the past, remedy lies in our hands, and if we do not help we cannot escape the responsibility.

(Repeated to Angora, and Saving to Cairo, Jerusalem and Bagdad.)

E 2570/2170/89] No. 347

Mr. Havard to Viscount Halifax.—(Received September 3.)

(No. 117. Secret.)
(Telegraphic.) *Beirut, September 3, 1940.*

My telegram No. 101, first paragraph.

During the past week there have been indications that the local movement in favour of General de Gaulle has increased considerably. Increase is expected to continue as German attacks on England fail during the current month. [illegible] have been privately in touch with this consulate-general and Damascus Consulate is passed to you for transmission, if you see fit, to de Gaulle.

2. Possibility of the Syrians eventually joining in the Gaullist movement is no longer as remote as it seemed until recently, as a result of the demonstration of the British will and power to resist, arrival of letters from France describing its deplorable state, revolt in French Central African territories and local economic difficulties showing inability of the Syrians to live independently of the neighbouring countries.

3. Support for Vichy Government is now on the wane amongst the younger military officers and civilian officials, many of whom are wondering whether joining with de Gaulle would not be the better course. Small groups are working in all the principal centres to spread propaganda on behalf of de Gaulle.

4. Main difficulty at present is that these groups lack leadership and are not always aware of each other's existence. If their efforts could be directed and co-ordinated, they might spread very rapidly.

5. It is suggested that a valuable impulse might be given to the movement if de Gaulle could now send some well-known representative to the Near East with whom his supporters in this country could get in touch, and who could, in broadcasting Cairo and particularly Jerusalem the facts in second paragraph [illegible] efforts of the free Frenchmen elsewhere to continue the struggle. He should not attack Vichy or High Commissioner until reaction here became clearer.

6. General Catroux has been mentioned by several persons as being ideal for such a representative on account of his reputation in this country. If he could be sent to Cairo it is thought he could exert important influence on French opinion here.

7. As stated, preceding paragraphs represent views expressed by French themselves. I would add the following comments:—

8. High Commissioner is now almost universally discredited in this country for his supineness. His broadcast of 30th August (my telegrams Nos. 113 and

115) and his apparent failure to secure from the Vichy Government the small concessions necessary to restore normal relations with His Majesty's Government begin to suggest that he is incapable of fulfilling desiderata of His Majesty's Government or of resisting any attempt of Italian commission to create a base of hostile activity in this country. I venture to suggest, therefore, that we should as far as possible encourage pro-Gaulle propaganda (which could be linked with pro-British propaganda advocated in my telegram under reference) here in the hope that the situation may eventually become ripe for a complete *volte face*. For the benefit of surrounding Arab countries we can truthfully stress the economic advantages that would result for the Arab population from adhesion to British orders, though I have in any case no reason for believing that the Arabs in general would not view with favour the re-entry of Syria into the war on our side.

(Repeated to Angora, Bagdad, and Cairo and Jerusalem, Saving.)

E 2604/2107/65] No. 348

Mr. Gardener to Viscount Halifax.—(Received September 6.)

(No. 38.)
(Telegraphic.) *Damascus, September 5, 1940*

THREE separate sources, including Iraqi Consul-General and French delegate, yesterday informed me that bands were being formed in Syria to foment trouble in Palestine. Delegate went no further, but other two said that, since Italian Disarmament Commission arrived, they had been working hard in this direction. Iraqi added that the bands were being formed in Deir Ez Zor region to operate against Iraq and especially the oil fields. He said French knew of this move and, while not helping it, were not preventing.

[illegible] Iraqi said that Italians were also working with ex Mufti in Bagdad (whom he urged should be much more closely watched), and that the latter having received promises that he would be made Arab ruler had asked Nationalist *bloc* here to raise disorders in Syria and Palestine. *Bloc* were, he said, prepared to create disorders here but not in Palestine, because they considered their aims were best served by a British victory.

Iraqi Consul-General considered danger very real and urged that action should be taken at once to counter Italian activity. He suggested best way would be to imitate these tactics and raise bands who would bribe or intimidate Italian organizations. He added that he had been requested by Nationalist *bloc* to approach me with an offer of their services in this connexion. That party would however, greatly prefer to declare a provisional Syrian Government based on Palestinian frontier, which would, he said, act under our guidance, to do this they would require financial backing and some arms.

Iraqi Consul-General said he had consulted Turkish Consul, who was submitting to his Government the idea of forming counter bands to operate from Turkish frontier. Iraqi considered his Government, if consulted, would give unofficial facilities to anti-Italian bands.

I feel there is some truth in these three reports that the Italians are fomenting trouble in Palestine and here. I am however suspicious of Iraqi's insistence on use of Nationalists, who are known to be Iraqi nominees and who have always been suspected of intrigues with Axis Powers.

I explained that we regarded the French as our Allies and that we could do nothing to embarrass them.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 22, Jerusalem, No. 32, Angora, Bagdad and Beirut, No. 10, Saving.)

E 2540/2170/89] No. 349

Consul-General Havard to Viscount Halifax.—(Received September 8.)

(No. 125.)
(Telegraphic.) *Beirut, September 7, 1940*

MY telegram No. 112, paragraph 1.

In pursuance of order received about a month ago from Vichy, and now put into force in anticipation of arrival of German observer, all German and most Austrian subjects have now been summoned by the French authorities and given the choice between returning at once to Germany or being interned.

(Repeated to Cairo, Jerusalem, Bagdad and Angora.)

E 2604/2107/65] No. 350

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received September 10.)

(No. 545.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, September 9, 1940*

DAMASCUS telegram No. 38.

[illegible] is in touch with the Mufti. Italy will doubtless seek to make trouble for us wherever they can and organization of bands in Syria to work into Palestine and Iraq is an obvious move.

I assume that Iraq Consul-General is reporting this information to his Government and is urging them to take necessary precautions. I share Mr. Gardener's suspicion of his eagerness to obtain British support for bandits organized by Nationalist *bloc*. No one here has however as yet approached me on the subject.

(Repeated to Angora, No. 52 and Cairo, Jerusalem and Beirut, Saving by bag.)

E 2637/2170/89] No. 351

Mr. Hoare to Viscount Halifax.—(Received September 17.)

(No. 140.)
(Telegraphic.) *Beirut, September 16, 1940*

FRENCH High Commissioner asked me to call on 15th September.

He complained of unfounded allegations made against the Italian Commission by British propaganda sources which were saying that the Italians had demanded the cession of French military aeroplanes and other material, as well as the use of aerodromes in Syria, and were aiming at leaving the French so weak in Syria that at a suitable moment they would be able to walk in [illegible] the French authorities did not appear to have tried to deny them. High Commissioner said that all these rumours were quite untrue and that there had been no friction whatever between the local French military or civil authorities and the Italian Commission. The latter had kept strictly to the terms of the armistice. He could assure me that, had they tried to go beyond those terms, they would have been resisted by both general officer commanding and himself.

2. High Commissioner added that he had learned that there were subversive movements afoot among junior military officers. These were, however, in a minority, and it would be a pity if such a movement broke out and had to be [illegible] propaganda and, although he himself wished for a British victory from the [illegible] would have to carry out his task of keeping order. He added that a situation might arise at some future date when the Germans would make the position of Vichy untenable. France might well then have to reconsider its attitude and in that event, it was essential that there should be complete harmony in the army

2. My information regarding activities of the Italian Commission suggests that the numerous rumours of friction, arising from their exaggerated demands on the French, are unfounded, and that they have confined themselves to making [illegible] them and aviation spirit and spares in hangars, and the compiling of statistics regarding exportable surplus of cereals and wool. They have not indulged in [illegible] strictly to their terms of reference. I had the impression that they [illegible] and find their position here difficult in face of the rising tide of pro-British feeling and the hostility for Italians felt by the French military. There have been at least three incidents in public places between individual French and Italian officers, resulting in the punishment of the former.

(Repeated to Cairo, Bagdad, Jerusalem and Angora.)

E 2709/2170/89 [illegible]

Mr Gardener to Viscount Halifax.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 40.)
(Telegraphic.) *Damascus, September 27, 1940.*

IT is stated by various sources that Nationalist *bloc* is now definitely working with the Axis Powers to create disorder in Syria.

Party propaganda is to the effect that French have lost power and cannot defend the country against the Axis invasion via Turkey under Russian pressure [illegible] which, in agreement with the Axis, will secure independence of Syria. Party are certainly organising pressure on the French to release political prisoners.

Moderate sections are reported to be considering counter action by propaganda and even revolt—a course which I have always advised against when possible.

I cannot believe that the French will permit revolt, though they may well give a measure of power to Nationalists under Axis pressure, as present President of the Council is compromised over concession given to Iraq Petroleum Company.

(Repeated to Jerusalem, No. 37, Cairo, No. 27, Bagdad, Angora and Beirut [? No. 18], Saving.)

E 2540/2170/89] No. 353

Mr Havard to Viscount Halifax.—(Received October 2.)

(No. 160.)
(Telegraphic.) *Beirut, October 1, 1940.*

My telegram No. 112, first paragraph.

German in question arrived by train 30th September.

(Repeated to Cairo, Angora and Bagdad.)

E 2388/198/89] No. 354

Note on Political Parties in Damascus.—(Communicated by Consul Gardener, Damascus. Received October 8, 1940.)

NO claim is made for accuracy and finality in the following brief account of the political parties in Damascus. To ensure accuracy far better sources of information are needed than those possessed by this Consulate. Finality can [illegible] but there are two underlying principles, (*a*) every Syrian with any pretention to [illegible] though few are prepared to make any sacrifice to attain it.

Since independence is the main plank in all party platforms, there is little to divide one party from another. In consequence, the strength of the various parties rises or falls, new parties are created or old ones expire, while the [illegible] ry political aims vary with bewildering frequency. These changes may be [illegible] about by political changes in Syria or elsewhere, by the personal ambi- [illegible] they may receive from [illegible]

The broad grouping is the Shahbandar party—a moderate party of relatively respectable people against the rest, whose chief leaders have, generally speaking, unsavoury characters.

Kutla.

This is by far the most energetic party here. It is probably weaker numerically than the Shahbandar party, but it is much better organised, and as its aims are more positive than that of its rival, the Shahbandar party, it is more forceful.

The Kutla party aims at the complete independence of Syria, free of foreign influence or protection, the government to take the form of a republic. Until recently it has not been interested in pan Arabism or in union with any other Arab State, but lately Iraq has been interested in this party and appears to be supporting it. While that country has stated that its interest is purely the abstract protection of brother Arabs, it is to be doubted whether Iraq's interest is really so altruist[illegible]

It has always been suspected that the party has been supported and guided by Germany in order to harass the French, but proof is apparently lacking. It is generally believed here that this party is responsible for the assassination in June last of Dr Shahbandar—their greatest opponent. The name of Amir Abdullah of Transjordan is also repeated locally to appear on their murder list. In this connexion it is interesting to state that immediately after the murder of Dr Shahbandar, the town was convinced (by rumours) that the Amir Abdullah has met a similar fate.

When the Kutla party was in power (until March 1939) it was most venal and corrupt. The leaders of the party are certainly unscrupulous, self seeking individuals, clever and plausible speakers, and the party, being well organised [illegible] a set back, but it apparently now hopes, with Iraqi backing, to recover its position.

Kutla Leaders.

President.—Hashem el Atassi (see F.O. Personalities No. 13), ex President of the Syrian Republic. Respectable and moderate. Rather a figure head of his party.

Jamil Mardam.—F.O. Personalities No. 91.

Ihsan Sherif.—F.O. Personalities No. 130.

Ahmed el Lahham.—An Arab, formerly a major in the Turkish army, not intelligent, of no real account.

Lutfi el Haffar.—F.O. Personalities No. 47, an unscrupulous man, lately reported to be a French spy in the ranks of the Kutla.

Sa'adullah al Jabri.—F.O. Personalities No. 66.

Fares Khoury.—F.O. Personalities No. 80. Believed to have resigned from Kutla party on the 12th August, 1940, probably as protest against murder of Shahbandar. The statement was subsequently denied.

[illegible] Khoury.—F.O. Personalities No. 79.

It is commonly believed here that Jamil Mardam, Sa'adullah-al-Jabri and [illegible] Khoury are the three members of the Kutla party responsible for the murder of Dr Shahbandar.

Istiklal.

This party is also a Nationalist party, whose aim is the independence of Syria. Unlike the Kutla party, it believes that a certain amount of foreign protection is necessary, though it insists on a choice of protector. It would not accept Italy. Its first choice would be America, and then Germany or Britain.

depending on the outcome of the present conflict or of what inducement it was offered.

It is reputed to be more pan-Arab than the Kitla party, but it seems to be opposed to the Hashimite family and vaguely in favour of a son of Ibn Saud as a ruler of Syria.

At present the Istiklal party has formed a coalition with the Kitla. Its strength is unknown, but it is not great. The leader is Shukri Quwatly (F.O. Personalities No. 110), a fanatic who since the war is strongly suspected of being in German pay. Two members of this party, Nabih al-Azmeh and Adil al-Azmeh, were accused of being in the plot to murder the President of the Council, Bahij Bey el Khatib, on the 25th July, 1939. The former is in prison, condemned to twenty years' imprisonment, and the latter is a refugee in Iraq.

[illegible]

[illegible] of the "youth" organisations under the presidency of A[illegible] [illegible]executive). It has not a large following. It is, of course, national in [illegible] and opposed to the French and British. It is stated to be anti-Italian [illegible] account of the Italian conquest of Albania and Libya. It is reputed to be in [illegible]rman pay. Its views do not appear to differ greatly from those of the Istiklal party. Some of its members are under arrest, and it is expected that they will soon be brought to trial.

Istiklal al Amal al Qawmi

This is rather an obscure party, who at one time form[illegible] the Kitla party. They are believed to be implicated in the [illegible] of Bahij el Khatib, and the following members fled: Shafiq Sul[illegible] Huda el Yafi, both lawyers, who fled to Iraq, and Ahmad as Sl[illegible] now in Transjordan. The party has adopted the Iraqi head-dress, perhaps indicating some connexion with that country.

Shahbandar

This party, as every political association here, is Nationalist. It is, however, the party of moderate-minded men, and is animated by a less fanatic outlook than the others. While aiming at ultimate independence for Syria, it is content to realise its goal by stages, and realises that foreign protection is essential. As protector it prefers Britain to France.

The party has definite somewhat pan-Arab tendencies, and appears to favour a federation of Palestine, Syria and Transjordan under British protection with the Amir Abdullah of Transjordan as ruler (a reason for Dr. Shahbandar's murder).

So great was the respect with which Dr. Shahbandar was held that were he now alive he could probably have swung public opinion on any side he wished.

As the party is badly organised and its policy is a moderate one, its "drive" is not proportional to its strength, which is possibly slightly greater than that of the Kitla party.

As a result of the murder of Dr. Shahbandar public opinion has temporarily swung to its side. The Druses were always in sympathy with this party on account of their association with Dr. Shahbandar during the rebellion of 1925. Since his murder in June the Druses appear to have come out openly on the side of the Shahbandarists. They certainly came to Damascus and demonstrated their grief at his death.

The members of this party are (if the Druses are excluded) relatively unknown. This anonymity reflects the character of the party and the difficulty of organising it. The acting president of the party is now Nassouh Babil, the editor of the *Ayyam*, while the leading members are Darwish el Ajlani, a wealthy respectable Damascene, Fauzi and Nassib Bakri (F.O. Personalities Nos. 29 and 30) (who resigned from the Kitla party after the doctor's death), Munir al Mahairi, nephew of doctor, apothecary, Dr. Abdul Qadir Zahra, Izzat Qatlan, former private secretary to Dr. Shahbandar, Nassouhi al Bukhari (Prime Minister in April 1939) (F.O. Personalities No. 37), Rashid Bey Bakdash, former Turkish officer, an Arab, Shafiq Diab, a big merchant, Hasan Bey al Hakim, ex-minister (F.O. Personalities No. 50), Said Haidar, a mutawali and notable from Baalbeck, Mustafa Burmada (F.O. Personalities No. 34), president of the

Court of Cassation, Mustafa Nizamat Bey, ex-member of Shura Court, Sheikh Yusif al-Asmi, a Druse sheikh of the Ledja district. Since the death of Shahbandar the following Druses are reported to have joined the party: Abdul Ghaffar Pasha el Atrash (F.O. Personalities No. 14), Sultan Pasha el-Atrash (F.O. Personalities No. 16) and Zaid Bey el Atrash.

Hizb al Islah

This can scarcely be called a (reform) party, but it claims to exist. Its leader is Hakki Bey el Azm (F.O. Personalities No. 21). The party is called Nationalist, but it is very pro-French. It desires to achieve independence by evolution under French auspices. It is not interested in pan-Arabism, but could under certain conditions work with the Shahbandarists.

Communist

This party had a small following in Damascus prior to the outbreak of war. It was recruited chiefly from students and such industrial workers as are to be found in Damascus, *e.g.*, the railway workshops and textile factories. The majority of its workers appear to be Armenian, who, with their Russian connexions are easy prey to Communist propaganda.

Its *professed* aims were those expressed by Communists throughout the world, viz., the amelioration of conditions for the working man. Yet even this [illegible]ned with a nationalist outlook, as is proved by the [illegible] that greeted the declaration that they had come to study [illegible] French Communist Deputies Baril [illegible] Damascus in 1938.

When, just after the outbreak of war, the Communist party in France was dissolved, similar action was taken in Syria, when a number of prominent Communists were arrested. Others were arrested subsequently, including Khaled Bagdash, the Damascus leader. The Military Court at Beirut under date of the 9th August, 1940, sentenced twenty of these Communist leaders to various terms of imprisonment varying from five years' prison and a fine of 1000 gold francs to eight months' prison. The party can now be said to have ceased to exist, although the material for its reconstruction is still present.

Apart from political parties, a great deal of political activity takes place in masonic lodges. In Damascus there is an "orient" of five lodges under the jurisdiction, it is understood, of the Grand Orient of France. There is also an independent Orient Lodge under the jurisdiction of Egypt. The Provincial of the five lodges is Atta Bey al Ayoubi (F.O. Personalities No. 17), while one of the Masters is Ihsan Hakki (formerly secretary of the Indian Moslem League in Geneva).

It is reported that these lodges were disgruntled at the dissolution of masonry in France. Now that the ban has been extended to countries under mandate their discontent will have increased.

E 2774/2170/89

Mr. Havard to Viscount Halifax.—(Received October 13.)

(No. 172.)
(Telegraphic.) *Beirut, October 12, 1940.*

FOR Ministry of Economic Warfare.—

Departure of British crews and requisitioning of *Patria* having virtually settled question of detained British ships, the time seems to me to have arrived when the whole question of our policy towards French mandate authorities might with advantage be re-examined.

2. Perusal of desiderata contained in paragraph 4 of your telegram No. 53 shows present position to be as follows:

(*a*) This question is so hypothetical that it is impossible to envisage what French would do in the many different sets of conditions in which it might arise.

(*b*) Despite presence of numerous Italians and one German, no overt enemy propaganda is being permitted. Press and local radio are in general objective with slight bias to our side and although one or two minor papers which have always been anti-British sometimes publish objectionable articles, some other papers are actively pro-British. Italians are doubtless doing clandestine propaganda, but so far at least results are not apparent and local population continues with few exceptions to exhibit anti-Italian feelings and hopes for British victory.

(*c*) State of public order is satisfactory and allegations of French harshness towards Arab Nationalists are unfounded.

(*d*) Authorities are only too anxious for trade with Palestine if we will permit it.

(*e*) French appear entirely to appreciate the necessity for our control, witness proposal put forward in my telegram No. 159. Crude oil at Tripoli is about to be used for production of petrol for local use. Facilities are lacking for export of other products likely to benefit enemy, since most of such products, of which there is a surplus here, are bulky and could not be exported in any quantity by rail through Turkey.

(*f*) This is being done.

(*g*) Apart from enforced exile of this Consulate-General in Alex, no obstacles to the work of any of our Consulates are being made.

(*h*) Facilities are not being afforded, but if they were would result in Italian counter measures, which might be more heavily supported financially. Jamming of Cairo and Jerusalem French broadcasts can hardly be objected to, since those stations were openly inciting French troops here to revolt.

(*i*) Question now settled.

4. [illegible] told that if they go [illegible]

4. Above [illegible] ts and Arab N[illegible] preferable to this [illegible] clearing agreements with Palestine, while not [illegible] e benefit on both and would [illegible] It is also relevant that French [illegible] h Syria for Palestine and may [illegible] this trade, to which I understand Palestine authorities attach importance.

7. In these circumstances I venture to suggest that it sh[illegible] dered whether [illegible] economic sanctions on French here and bringing clearing agreement with Palestine into force than we are [illegible] seem advantageous to consider what *quid pro quo*, if any, we could ask to which French might be expected to agree and thereafter propose. H. M. C. [illegible]

(Repeated to Cairo, Bagdad and Angora and Jerusalem, Saving.)

E 2814/2170/89] No. 356

Mr. Gardener to Viscount Halifax.—(Received October 20.)

No. 45.

(Telegraphic.) R. *Damascus, October 17, 1940.*

My telegram No. 25 of 6th July.

Following three leaders of the Nationalist *bloc*, Jamil Mardam, Saadallah Jabri and Lutfi Haffar have been formally charged with complicity in the Shahbandar murder.

It is rumoured that they fled to Iraq two days ago.

(Repeated to Bagdad, Cairo, Saving Jerusalem, No. 2, and Beirut, No. 20.)

E 2814/2170/89 No. 357

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received October 20.)

(No. 627.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, October 19, 1940.*

FOLLOWING addressed to Beirut, telegram No. 38:—

"Jamil Mardam and Lutfi Haffar have arrived in Bagdad.

"Have you any information concerning circumstances of their departure from Syria?"

(Repeated to Jerusalem, No. 102, and Cairo, No. 167 (for Middle Eastern Intelligence Centre).)

E 2814/2170/89] No. 358

Mr. Havard to Viscount Halifax.—(Received October 21.)

(No. 186.)

(Telegraphic.) *Beirut, October 20, 1940.*

FOLLOWING addressed to Bagdad, telegram No. 62 of 20th October:

"Your telegram No. 38.

"See Damascus telegram No. 45 of 17th October repeated to you, which [illegible] for three days by French author[illegible] ved that these men were warned of the impending incul[illegible] of complicity in the Shahbandar murder and their escape contrived at [illegible]

(Reposted to Jerusalem and Cairo (for M.E.C.E.).)

E 2829/2170/89] No. 359

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received October 23.)

(No. 633.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, October 22, 1940.*

BEIRUT telegram No. 62.

Minister for Foreign Affairs told me yesterday that Jamil Mardam and other Syrian leaders had fled to Iraq from Syria because the French (police), after Shahbandar murder, were threatening them with prolonged and rumous proceedings in connexion with it as a reprisal for their participation in the revived agitation for the release of political prisoners. They claimed that there was no evidence against them and that the intention was merely to humiliate them and intimidate others.

Minister for Foreign Affairs said that these men were strongly anti-Axis, but gave me no grounds for inferring that their flight might be a move in a political plan. When, however, I expressed the hope that they would not be politically active in Iraq, Minister for Foreign Affairs looked disappointed.

He stressed the point that Jamil Mardam and his friends had reported that the French morale was low and that the military were at loggerheads with the

civil authorities, and hinted strongly that now was the time for British intervention. He suggested that I should receive a visit from Jamil Mardam.

I rejected this suggestion, reminding the Minister for Foreign Affairs that I had repeatedly pointed out that it was in no way in the British interest at present that there should be any disorders in Syria, and explained that any suggestion that Britain was in contact with those in conflict with the authorities in Syria would tend to drive the French into the arms of the Italians. Iraqi Government should be very careful not to contribute themselves to any such [illegible]

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 169 (please copy Middle East Intelligence Centre telegram, Jedda), Jerusalem, No. 103 and Beirut, No. 39.)

E 2814/2170/89] No. 360

Viscount Halifax to Mr. Gardener (Damascus).

(No. 35.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, October 24, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 45 [of 17th October] and Baghdad telegram No. 38 to Beirut [of 19th October: Arrival in Iraq of Jamil Mardam, &c.]

In view of charges against these men and of Dr. Shahbandar's reputation of friendship for His Majesty's Government, it appears *prima facie* desirable that His Majesty's Ambassador at Baghdad should avoid all contact with them. Please telegraph your views.

(Repeated to Baghdad, No. 542, Cairo, No. 1179, and Jerusalem, No. 995.)

E 2829/2170/89] No. 361

Mr. Gardener to Viscount Halifax.—(Received October 27.)

(No. 46.)
(Telegraphic.) *Damascus, October 25, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 35.

Such loyalty would scarcely be expected or appreciated here. Furthermore Nationalists are the most powerful party here and although leaders are strongly suspected of having accepted Italian subsidies, it is possible that the party might be useful to His Majesty's Government in the future. I have already heard rumours that leaders will seek His Majesty's Government's support to form an independent Syrian Government—a task of which I do not consider Shahbandar party capable at the [illegible]

British support would, I think, be more welcome to Mahometans here than any other (even German), so I suggest that in order to keep our advantage, contact should be established. His Majesty's Ambassador should not, I suggest, see them himself, but contact could be made unofficially or even perhaps secretly by Oriental Secretary.

P.S.—Reliable informant tells me Shahbandar party has sent strong protest to Iraqi Government for harbouring these men.

(Repeated to Baghdad, Cairo, No. 29, Jerusalem, No. 39.)

E 2829/2170/89] No. 362

Mr. Gardener to Viscount Halifax.—(Received October 27.)

(No. 48.)
(Telegraphic.) *Damascus, October 26, 1940.*

NAZIH MUAYYAD [illegible] Nationalist party here are pressing the French to demand extradition of Nationalist leaders, and intend using every method short of violence to obtain their ends. They intend to organise similar agitations in Transjordan and Egypt. He asked me to inform Faisal Shahbandar in Egypt of the reasons of the flight of leaders and of the proposed action. If you approve, may this please be done?

Nazih Muayyad said that the French warned the leaders of the impending accusation and did not arrest them, although he personally gave them four hours notice of the intended fl[illegible]

He added that they had sent one protest to Iraq against harbouring fugitives, and if they were not surrendered, intended to organise demonstrations against Iraqi Government.

In reply to my question, Nazih Muayyad said that his party could not work with Shukri Quwatli, who was the tool of the ex-Mufti, who was, according to Shahbandarist circles, in Istanbul in touch with the Germans. He added that Q[illegible]i was spreading rumours in Syria that the ex-Mufti would soon arrive here [illegible] German dictator and would nominate Nationalist leaders as Ministers.

[illegible] expressing the deepest suspicion and contempt of the French, he claimed [illegible] party [group undecypherable] with veterans of 1925 revolt was stro[illegible] than ever and placed it unreservedly at our disposal.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 31, Jerusalem, No. 41 and Baghdad.)

E 2845/2170/89] No. 363

Mr. Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received October 28.)

(No. 254.)
(Telegraphic.) *Jedda, October 26, 1940.*

FUAD HAMZA has telegraphed to Amir Feisal that Turkey is betraying Britain and joining the Axis in exchange for satisfaction of her claims in Syria.

2. Amir said that this news had astonished him, and asked whether I had any information tending to confirm it. I replied on the contrary. I was convinced that it was without any foundation; Turkey, I understood, would resist any violation of her territory, and had, moreover, no claims to satisfy in Syria. It was the sort of story which might well be put about by our enemies at a time when negotiations were afoot for a separate peace to prove to the French that our friends were deserting us, and that to continue to back our chances would be futile.

3. Fuad further reported that the Vichy Government had agreed to allow to the Turks free use for all purposes [1 group omitted] of railway to Syria [two groups undecypherable].

[illegible] No. 46, Beirut, No. 7, and M.E.C.E., No. [illegible]

E 2854/2170/89] No. 364

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received October 29.)

(No. 644.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, October 28, 1940.*

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs informed me to-day that, according to Iraqi Consul-General at Beirut, French High Commissioner has been instructed by Vichy Government to release all political prisoners.

(Repeated to Beirut, No. 40, Jerusalem, No. 104, and Cairo, No. 172.)

E 2854/2170/89] No. [illegible]

Mr. Gardener to Viscount Halifax.—(Received October 31.)

(No. 49.)
(Telegraphic.) *Damascus, October 30, 1940.*

ABOUT forty leading members of the Nationalist party assembled here [illegible]

Irritated by the French bad manners and bad staff work in arranging interview with Shukri Quwatli made a violent anti-French speech defying their authority.

I do not think too much attention should be paid to this outburst, except that (*a*) it is the first real political manifestation since September 1939, and (*b*) it is probably an indication of Nationalist sentiments.

Repeated to Jerusalem, No. 42, Bagdad, Cairo, No. 32, Beirut, No. 26 Saving.

E 2845/2170/89. No. 366

Viscount Halifax to Mr. Stonehewer-Bird (Jedda,

(No. 179.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, November* 1, 1940.

YOUR telegram No. 254 of the 20th October (Syria).

Please inform Amir Faisal that I am satisfied that report regarding attitude of Turkey is totally unfounded. It is, in fact, obvious piece of enem[illegible] Turkish, Iraqi and Syrian authorities [illegible] to that concluded in 1926) between [illegible] regarding passage of war material. His M[illegible] and Turkish Government attach great importance to [illegible] of transit along Syrian railways, and for their part His Majesty's Government have made this clear to French High Commissioner. So far, no difficulties of any kind have been experienced. You may inform His Royal Highness accordingly.

Repeated to Angora, No. 1161, Bagdad, No. 557; Beirut, No. 157; and M.E.I.C., No. 55.)

E 2829/2170/89. No. 367

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received November 7.)

(No. 657.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, November* 6, 1940.

DAMASCUS telegram No. 46.

My French colleague called on me yesterday, on returning from a visit to Syria. He said he was personally satisfied that Jamil Mardam and his associates had no serious quarrel with the French authorities, and had left the country to [illegible] He [illegible] not believe their arrival in Iraq was part of Nationalist or Axis plot. He thought, however, that they aimed at forming shadow Government ready to take over if opportunity came, but that they had at present no intention of plotting an insurrection. He proposed to keep in touch with them in Bagdad. I told him of my attitude hitherto, and said I feared we had received very little credit for the care we had taken to avoid embarrassing relations of the French authorities with the Arabs in Syria.

Minister for Foreign Affairs tells me that at the suggestion of M. Garreau he has instructed the Iraqi Consul-General in Beirut to convey to the High Commissioner the satisfaction given to the Iraqi Government by release of the Syrian political prisoners and to express the hope that it will soon be made possible for Jamil and his friends to return home.

(Repeated to Beirut, No. 41, Cairo, No. 175 (copy to Middle East Intelligence Centre), Angora, No. 77, and Jerusalem, No. 106. Beirut please pass to Damascus.)

E 2829/2170/89. No. 368

Viscount Halifax to Sir B. Newton (Bagdad).

(No. 571.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, November* 10, 1940.

YOUR telegram No. 633 [of 22nd October: Syrian Nationalist leaders in Iraq].

In view of opinion expressed in Damascus telegram No. 46 [of 25th October], I think it might be well for you to arrange for a member of your

staff to establish contact with Jamil Mardam and his friends at a suitable opportunity. You will appreciate, however, that these Syrian Nationalist leaders are not very trustworthy, nor do they command great respect among their compatriots. Their alleged complicity in the murder of Dr. Shahbandar has involved them in a blood feud with their political opponents. It may be, moreover, that they, like the Mufti, are in touch with the Axis Powers.

2. It is not at present desirable for His Majesty's Government to compete with the Axis Powers by giving promises to interested parties with regard to future status of Syria. Nor do they intend to enter into commitments to any particular group of Syrian politicians. Our object in establishing contact with Syrian Nationalists is rather to sound them with regard to their attitude towards [illegible] empt by the Italians or Germans to occupy their country.

3. The line to be taken with them (or with Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs if he again raises questions of Syria) should presumably be as follows. It can be pointed out to them that, if the Italians were ever to gain possession of Syria, no one can suppose that they would withdraw again and hand it over to be governed by the Syrians themselves. Intelligent Syrians cannot be taken in by non-committal German declarations of sympathy with Arab nationalism. They must know that, if Syria ever came under Italian control, she would suffer the fate of Libya, and the Arabs would soon have cause to regret the passing of the comparative freedom which they enjoyed under the mandatory régime. It is up to the Syrians themselves to help to resist any threat from the Axis. As for our attitude, we a[illegible] for Syria [illegible]

E 2911/2170/89. No. 369

Sir H. Knatchbull-Hugessen to Viscount Halifax.—(Received November 10.)

(No. 1456.)
(Telegraphic.) *Angora, November* 9, 1940.

COUNSELLOR of Belgian Legation has brought back the following information from a three weeks' visit to Syria and Palestine:—

2. It is probable that a British move into Syria would encounter little resistance. Most of the younger officers are pro-Gaulle, though intimidated by Bourget purge. Foreign Legion (still near Baalbec) are reported to be [illegible] pro-British, as are the Arab tribes, particularly Druse and Jebel Druse.

3. Shortages are blamed on the French military authorities, who will [illegible] release supplies. Italians are generally detested and trouble might be expe[illegible] should they attempt to take over the Administration. German propaganda is assisted by the supply of goods against deferred payment.

4. Belgian Counsellor's impression is that in the event of French Administration failing, civilians would prefer British to any other.

(Repeated to Beirut, unnumbered.)

E 2845/2170/89. No. 370

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received November 28.)

(No. 510.)

[illegible] Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and, with reference to Foreign Office telegram No. 179 of the 1st November, 1940, to Jedda, has the [illegible] 1st November, 1940: Anglo-Turkish understanding and Arab interests.

Bagdad, November 4, 1940.

Enclosure in No. 370

Minute by Sir Basil Newton, dated November 1, 1940

DURING the course of the farewell call which I paid on Sheikh Yusuf Yasin on the 31st October, he mentioned to me that the Arabs were still fearful lest Great Britain should make an agreement sacrificing Arab territory to Turkey in order to keep Turkey from being drawn into the Axis, and mentioned that a statement made by Mr. Butler in the House of Commons on the 9th October had increased this fear.

2. I said that these suspicions were quite unfounded and seemed to arise from a strange misunderstanding of the position. Surely it was quite clear that a British understanding with Turkey was a safeguard for the Arabs, not a threat to them. It was not hard to imagine how different the position of the Arab countries would now be if a good understanding had not been established between Britain and Turkey.

3. Sheikh Yusuf Yasin agreed that an Anglo-Turkish understanding was in Arab interests, but said the Arab fear was that they might have to pay too high a price for the benefits of such an understanding.

4. He betrayed no knowledge of the suspicion revealed in Fahd Hanza's recent message to the Amir Feisal reported in [illegible] telegram No. 254 to the Foreign Office.

[illegible]

November 1, 1940.

E 2829/2170/89] No. 371

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received December 4.)

(No. 737.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, December 2, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 571.

Oriental Secretary had a long conversation with Jamil Mardam on 26th November. Most of what he said was familiar talk of Arab Nationalists, particularly on the subject of Palestine, but it included some points of interest.

2. He declared that Arabs hated Italians, but took very different view of Germans, and said that many in Syria would prefer a German Protectorate to French régime. At the same time he hinted that what they would like best would be the creation of National Government under ægis of Britain. He attached little importance to German declaration of sympathy with Arab cause, but said that Italians were seeking to win favour by putting it about that under Axis pressure M. Chappe was to be given task of setting up a Nationalist Administration. His own personal plans seemed undecided, but in politics he declared himself a fatalist, saying that his country had already suffered so much that she could hardly suffer more.

(Repeated to Damascus, No. 7, Cairo, No. 40, Saving; Jerusalem, No. 47, Saving.)

E 3054/2170/89] No. 372

Mr. Havard to Viscount Halifax.—(Received December 9.)

(No. 252.)
(Telegraphic.) *Beirut, December 9, 1940.*

I AM informed by a reliable source that in a speech of 6th December to a gathering of officers, General Fougère made the following points:—

(a) Most French officers in Syria who had hesitated to follow Pétain after armistice had now been returned to France, where they would have to endure much hardship. Others not entirely loyal would go on next boat. A few were now in prison with certain civilians and an example would be made of them.

(b) There was still in Beirut a centre of intrigue which was encouraging desertions and distributing of pamphlets. He could not yet close it, but hoped this would soon be done. (Reference clearly to this consulate-general.)

(c) British wish to seize Syria and might make attempt in a few days. Situation was grave because he had so few troops, but he relied on them.

(d) Collaboration with Germany was agreed on by Pétain and Laval. France's greatest Foreign Minister for fifty years, and would be peaceful so long as there was no provocation from Great Britain. De Gaulle's movement was regrettable, but negligible. Great Britain was France's hereditary enemy, not Germany, who now wished to collaborate loyally with France.

Repeated to Cairo and Jerusalem.)

E 2854/2170/89] No. 373

Mr. Gardener to Viscount Halifax.—(Received December 10.)

(No. 1. Saving.)
(Telegraphic.) *En clair.* *Damascus, November 5, 1940.*

ON occasion of the end of Ramadan, the French Government, at the proposal of the High Commissioner, have released on parole (a) the Syrians condemned as the result of troubles in Damascus in March 1939, (b) those condemned for complicity in the plot against the president of the Syrian Council of Ministers, and (c) Izzat Darwazah, a Palestinian imprisoned for being in possession of explosives.

The position in regard to those Syrians who fled to Iraq is not clear, but it seems possible that they do not benefit by this decision.

(Repeated to Jerusalem, No. 4, Saving; Baghdad, Saving; Cairo, Saving.)

E 3066/2170/89] No. 374

Sir M. Lampson to Viscount Halifax.—(Received December 10.)

(No. 1693.)
(Telegraphic.) *Cairo, December 9, 1940.*

FOLLOWING received from Damascus. Addressed to Cairo telegram No. 34 of 4th December:—

I shall be grateful if you will repeat text by first available safe opportunity to Foreign Office, Baghdad, Jerusalem and Angora, as I have no facilities.

Following is impression of situation in Syria, with reservation that accurate information is difficult to obtain owing to rigid [? watch] on consulate.

A.—1. Syrian opinion is mainly pro-British, desiring occupation for economic reasons. Germans have a strong following, Italians none.

2. Syrians consider that French are finished, and so ceased to respect them.

3. French have antagonised Syrian trading interests through ineptitude and a harshness of their economic policy.

4. [illegible] present [illegible] of [illegible] of about 7,000 Kurds and Circassians, and in the embargo on Syrians joining foreign armies, the first open anti-British action taken by French authorities.

5. Syrians consider that Chappe's policy would have led to increased economic and perhaps other and greater difficulties with Palestine, &c.

6. It seems certain that Shukri Kuwatli, only remaining Nationalist leader, is in Italian pay. Many Syrians fear that French intend putting him in power with more liberal form of government. This would be unpopular, but the French could do it.

B.—1. Syria is now run by military, especially Second Bureau. Gestapo atmosphere reigns.

2. Amongst officers there is some increase of Free French sympathy, but movement is unimportant, because there is no organisation (due to B.1 above). There have been some incidents in officers' club.

3. French staff are convinced that British occupation is imminent and have made dispositions accordingly. They are sure British are trying to create internal disorder to coincide with the occupation which French would, I believe, resist.

4. Recently the military unsuccessfully tried to induce the High Commissioner to introduce National Government, presumably to reduce the chance of internal disorder.

Some French are convinced that Chiappe's mission was to conduct purge and to implement Laval policy.

E 3082 2170 89] No. 375

Mr. Gardener to Viscount Halifax.—(Received December 12.)

(No. 54.)
(Telegraphic.) *Damascus, December 11, 1940.*

AFTER a preliminary hearing on 9th December, Shahbandar trial has been postponed to 18th December to permit French to take precautions against disorder.

2. [illegible] two parties and by extension between us and Axis, since latter support Nationalist *bloc* while Shahbandar had known pro-British sentiments.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 39 (please send text to Jerusalem and Baghdad).)

E 3082 2170 89] No. 376

Mr. Gardener to Viscount Halifax.—(Received December 18.)

(No. 55.)
(Telegraphic.) *Damascus, December 17, 1940.*

MY telegram No. 54.

Party tension is increasing. There have been minor incidents.

2. It is generally believed that Italians are paying legal expenses of prisoners, and I think this may be true. Arab belief that French are too weak to maintain order is, I consider, quite satisfying.

3. I have been approached three times with suggestion that His Majesty's Government should make a financial contribution towards Shahbandar party cause, which is considered our own.

4. I am trying to verify the report that Nationalist party, having asked the French to restore them to power as the only means of guaranteeing order, received non-committal reply.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 40 (please send text to Jerusalem and Baghdad).)

E 3082 2170 89] No. 377

Mr. Gardener to Viscount Halifax.—(Received December 20.)

(No. 56.)
(Telegraphic.) *Damascus, December 18, 1940.*

MY telegram No. 55.

Nationalist party tried unsuccessfully to close the bazaar to-day on resumption of Shahbandar trial.

2. Shahbandar party have again asked me for financial assistance to the extent of £500. They propose to use the money to reinforce the party position with waverers who on account of the decline in trade, &c., are impoverished and tempted by Axis gold through Nationalists.

3. As Shahbandar party has been pro-British, it would seem to be in our interest to help them now.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 42.)

CHAPTER V.—GENERAL

E 7813 7697 65] No. 378

Viscount Halifax to Mr. Stonehewer-Bird (Jeddo).

(No. 13. Secret.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, January 20, 1940.*

I HAVE now considered Sir Reader Bullard's despatch No. 160 of the 13th November, with which he forwarded a translation of a statement by Ibn Saud about the Soviet menace, as well as Mr. Wall's letter and memorandum of the 3rd November on the same subject, and entirely approve the preliminary observations which Sir Reader Bullard instructed Mr. de Gaury to make to Ibn Saud in reply. In particular, I am satisfied that nothing which Mr. de Gaury was instructed to say conflicts with any views expressed by the Foreign Office on Arab federation.

2. The essence of the views which Ibn Saud desires to make known to His Majesty's Government seems to be that the Arab States would be able resist a Soviet threat to *their* independence more effectively if they were in some [illegible] fighting on its own, and that the creation of such an association by His Majesty's Government is urgent on account of the imminence of this threat and the apparent [illegible] vague. But although it may be his ambition to become the head of an Arab federation, it does not seem necessary to suppose that for his present purpose he really contemplates anything more than a system of defensive alliances, in which Great Britain would participate. At any rate it may be convenient to let it seem in any eventual reply that this is what he is thought to have meant.

3. Whether a system of Arab alliances on these lines is desirable or not and whether or not it would in present circumstances provide any real additional security against attack by a powerful State, it is at any rate within the range of practical politics in a sense in which Arab federation in its more usual meaning is probably not. So far as His Majesty's Government are concerned, all that would be needed would be an alliance with Ibn Saud himself and (though this would be more difficult, while also less essential) with the King of the Yemen. It is possible, moreover, that if His Majesty's Government were to give a sufficiently strong lead the Arab States, even including the Yemen, might be willing to become the allies of each other, while the French Government might conceivably agree to be a party to the various instruments in which the alliances were embodied. In any case, the idea of a solid *bloc* of Arab States following the lead of Great Britain and France is not in itself unattractive. But there are unfortunately various reasons which render it most difficult and even [illegible] the present time.

4. For a start, it is necessary to take account of the position of Italy. It [illegible] defensive alliance with Saudi Arabia and the Yemen would not be contrary to the terms of the Anglo-Italian Agreement of the 16th April, 1938, regarding certain areas in the Middle East. But any attempt to negotiate an alliance of any kind with either State would most certainly be regarded by the Italian Government as a breach of the spirit of that agreement. The continued neutrality of Italy is of great importance at the present time, and, just as the Anglo-Italian Agreements of 1938 have probably played a large part in determining the attitude [illegible] or the letter of any one of those agreements render it less certain that this attitude would continue to be observed.

5. An attempt might be made to reconcile Italy to a British or Franco-British alliance with Saudi Arabia and the Yemen on the ground that this alliance was aimed solely against the possibility of aggression by the Soviet Union. It is doubtful whether the Italian Government would find this wholly convincing. But, even if they did so, they might suggest that Italy should join the alliance.

If the acquiescence of Saudi Arabia or the Yemen could be secured, this extension of the principles of the Middle Eastern Agreement would not necessarily be wholly disadvantageous. Although no extension of Italian influence in Arabia could ever be welcome, the price might be worth paying for the sake of greater advantages in other directions, such as increased security against the Soviet Union.

6. [illegible] If their relations with Germany and the Soviet Union allowed it the Italian Government might demand to be allowed to participate in the full system of Middle Eastern alliances with which the proposed *bloc* was to be built up. This, again, if the Middle Eastern States consented (which is at least doubtful) might be a price worth paying for a substantial advantage such as Italian aid, not necessarily as a belligerent, in the prosecution of the war against Germany. But it would also create a serious complication, and possibly a serious danger, for British policy when the war was over.

7. The conclusion seems to be that unless the prospective advantages to be derived from the proposed Arab *bloc* are really substantial, it would not be worth while pursuing the idea of such a *bloc*, since this could only be done by arousing Italian suspicions which, in their turn, could only be allayed by allowing Italy to play a greatly enhanced rôle in Middle Eastern affairs. But for various reasons the advantages are, for the present at any rate, extremely problematical.

8. In the first place, His Majesty's Government and the French Government found in their negotiations with Turkey that, however desirous the Turkish Government might be to secure Turkey against attack or domination by powerful potential enemies, they were unwilling to commit themselves openly to an alliance, unless His Majesty's Government and the French Government would bind themselves not merely to afford assistance in a general way (as is usually done in treaties of alliance), but also to specify with precision the manner in which this assistance would be forthcoming (*e.g.*, the despatch of troops or the provision of arms or money, as is usually done as the result of staff conversations). Similarly, in their recent negotiations with Afghanistan, His Majesty's Government have found that for all their fear of the Soviet Union the Afghan Government were unwilling to commit themselves to a treaty of friendship with this country which would, it was hoped, have given them at least moral support. In the case of Turkey, Great Britain and France paid the Turkish price, high though it was, not only because Turkey is in a particularly exposed position, but also because, by reason of her geographical position and the qualities of her government and people, she must always constitute the principal obstacle to an advance by any European Power towards the Middle East. In the case of Afghanistan, His Majesty's Government were in the position that, notwithstanding the fact that the integrity of Afghanistan has been one of the cardinal [illegible] to Afghanistan the arms and forces which would be required if a guarantee of her integrity had to be fulfilled. Still less are His Majesty's Government in a position at the present time to spare arms and forces for the Arab States, which are not directly exposed to Soviet aggression, over and above what they are already doing in this respect for reasons arising out of their relations with each of those States individually. Whatever resources of this kind they may possess are needed for their own equipment or for the equipment of States more immediately exposed. Yet without precise assurances as to the aid which they would receive from Great Britain and France should their territory be invaded, none of the Middle Eastern States would be likely, when it came to the point, to enter the proposed *bloc*.

9. But even if it were possible for His Majesty's Government, in spite of all these difficulties, to promote the formation in the Middle East of a front against further Soviet penetration, the State in greatest need of their support would not be any of the Arab States, but Iran, whose isolation would in all [illegible] should the Soviet Government ever definitely decide on a policy of Middle Eastern adventure.

10. His Majesty's Government are not, however, in a position to defend at any rate the northern parts of Iran against Soviet aggression or domination while the present war with Germany continues, nor could they undertake the task of ousting a violently pro-Soviet Iranian Government. The most they might

be able to do (and they would no doubt have to do it, if their prestige in Asia were to be retained) would be to counter any serious Soviet activity by a precautionary occupation of the roads leading from the Iranian plateau to Iraq and the Iranian oil-fields, and by such public explanations as the circumstances of the time might require of the action, if any, which they proposed to take, when their hands were free elsewhere, to restore the *status quo* throughout Iran as a whole. But in the case of Iran, once again, it is difficult to suppose that an attempt to conclude an alliance with that country, even assuming that the Shah were to be convinced that such an alliance would serve his interests better than perseverance in the path of strict neutrality, could be brought to a successful issue in the absence of precise indications of what support the Shah would receive in the form of British or French arms and forces in the event of Soviet aggression.

11. It must be clearly understood that the objections to Ibn Saud's proposals set forth in the preceding paragraphs are based on world conditions as they are to-day, and that nobody can foresee what new policies or what sacrifices of what might otherwise be thought essential interests it may be necessary to accept under the stress of war. I have stated the objections at some length because these proposals raise issues of fundamental importance, and it is desirable that you should understand the background against which the decisions of His Majesty's Government in regard to them have been taken. But, although I have no objection to your giving Ibn Saud at least a hint of this background in private and confidential conversation between him and yourself, your official reply, whether written or otherwise, should, if you see no objection, be on the more general lines set forth in the following paragraphs:—

12. After stating that I have been informed of the personal observations conveyed to Ibn Saud by Sir Reader Bullard and entirely approve those observations, you should inform Ibn Saud that His Majesty's Government have [illegible] situation on the Arab world, and they deeply appreciate his friendly sentiments and his conviction that the Allies are defending in the war the interests of the Arabs as well as their own.

13. Ibn Saud may rest assured that His Majesty's Government attach great importance in their own interests not only to the friendship, but also to the security, of all the Arab lands, and they are anxious at all times to do what is possible to retain their friendship and preserve their security. They and the French Government are alive to the dangers which threaten these lands and to the responsibilities and obligations which fall upon them under their existing mandatory and treaty engagements. These responsibilities and obligations they have no intention of avoiding.

14. His Majesty's Government would, however, observe that they do not share Ibn Saud's fears that Turkey and Iran might be parties to any Soviet [illegible] campaign, that the Soviet Union is not in a position to engage in any prolonged adventure outside its own frontiers, though His Majesty's Government realise that the possibility of further Soviet aggression cannot be dismissed on this account.

15. As regards Turkey, she has already resisted Soviet pressure to disregard [illegible] by some of the reservations made by Turkey, when concluding the alliance with Great Britain and France, to the effect that her obligations under the alliance [illegible]

16. [illegible] If so, a new position would arise and His Majesty's [illegible] Government would have to consider what steps they [illegible] protect their own interests and those of their Arab friends.

17. His Majesty's Government hope, however, that this situation will not arise. Furthermore, their material resources, though great, are not unlimited and they feel sure that Ibn Saud will realise that, so far as material matters are

concerned, their policy must be not to devote their energies and resources to areas where no immediate danger is foreseen, but to concentrate them on meeting the German attack by land, sea and air and on strengthening those countries [illegible] all the Arab lands than the dissipation of British and French resources in the partial arming of a number of different States which are not immediately threatened by an extension of the war, especially as the Soviet Union is only dangerous, or potentially dangerous, while it is in close relations with an undefeated Germany.

18. Ibn Saud has suggested that, as the most effective means of preparing the Arab States against the possibility of a Soviet attack, there should be some kind of union between them, with a common programme and a common policy. His Majesty's Government certainly agree that the Arab States, if willingly [illegible] if divided. It has always been the aim of His Majesty's Government, so far as it lies in their power to promote friendly relations between the Arab States and to assist them to settle any differences that may arise between them. This will continue to be their policy. At the present moment, the Arabs are, in fact, united in a common detestation of the actions of Germany and the Soviet Union, but Ibn Saud must, like His Majesty's Government, be well aware of the many difficulties in the way of a closer degree of union. His Majesty's Government very much doubt whether these difficulties are likely to be surmounted, anyway unless (which they trust will not be the case) one of the Arab States were actually to be the victim of aggression.

19. His Majesty's Government regret that they are not able to give a more positive reply to Ibn Saud's suggestions. They will, however, bear his advice constantly in mind, and they will not hesitate to adopt it if changing circumstances should make it appear that some of his suggestions could be adopted with good prospects of success.

20. I have left to the end the possibility that Ibn Saud may have been [illegible] in Ibn Saud's position must find it difficult to understand how His Majesty's [illegible] of pounds, while the credits offered to himself, who has been so loyal a friend, have never been more than £80,000 and have even then proved of no practical value because His Majesty's Government cannot spare him small arms and ammunition to even half that amount. I hope that the true explanation will be [illegible] less seem most unsympathetic to Ibn Saud himself, and I realise that it may be necessary sooner or later to consider an offer of material assistance in some other form, such as a subsidy, by way of recompense. The principle of a subsidy has, as you know, been accepted by His Majesty's Government, although any suggestions for the payment of a definite sum at a definite time would need a further decision. This question will be considered on the receipt of any further reports you may submit on Ibn Saud's need for financial assistance.

21. Copies of this despatch are being sent to His Majesty's Ambassadors at Angora, Bagdad, Cairo, Paris, Tehran and Rome.

I am, &c.
HALIFAX

E 1818 266 65] No. 379

Viscount Halifax to Sir B. Newton (Bagdad)

(No. 103.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, April 25, 1940.*

YOUR despatch No. 611 [of 20th October: Bagdad Haifa route].

His Majesty's Government regard it as essential that whole Iraqi section of route from Transjordan frontier to Bagdad shall be completed to same standard as part already under construction in Transjordan. It is estimated that cost of this may amount to some £650,000, and to ensure efficient and rapid completion of work it is considered that construction must be undertaken by His Majesty's Government.

2. Please inform Iraqi Government as matter of urgency that His Majesty's Government consider execution of this work essential in the common interest and ask them for permission to carry it out. You should explain that His Majesty's Government are prepared to bear initial cost themselves, but as the road will be of great benefit to Iraqi Government, I trust that they may be prepared to make a contribution, as substantial as possible, to expenditure. You should make it plain that if His Majesty's Government construct this road, they expect Iraqi Government to accept responsibility for its upkeep, and you should endeavour to secure satisfactory assurance to that effect.

3. War Office are, however, anxious that work shall start as soon as possible in order to complete the maximum work before the rains begin. Commencement of construction is not, therefore, to be made dependent on assurance of contribution being forthcoming from Iraqi Government or even on assurance regarding upkeep, and I hope that consideration of these latter questions will not hold up permission to start work. Contract negotiations have reached stage where immediate permission is essential.

4. Please telegraph rep.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 28. Saving (*en clair*, by bag).)

E 1930 238 65 No. 380

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax (Received May 1.)

(No. 140.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, May 1, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 103.

Iraqi Government have granted permission for construction of road. Particulars by bag.

E 1750 953 65] No. 381

Mr. Boggallay to Mr. Stonehewer Bird (Jedda).

My dear Bird, *Foreign Office, May 10, 1940.*

We have read with the greatest interest your letter of the 8th April about our policy in the Arab countries.

2. As regards the particular question of Anglo-French co-operation in the Middle East, you are perfectly right in thinking that contact exists between His Majesty's Government and the French Government. It is close and constant. I do not mean that Great Britain and France have an agreed plan for the future [illegible] giving Palestine her independence by "white paper" stages or the French idea of a treaty with Syria on the Iraqi or Egyptian model when the times are more propitious will suffice in a post-war world, conditions of which are necessarily [illegible] on the most abstract plane, and I do not think it is practicable for anyone in either country, by taking thought, to define his aims or agree upon a line of policy except in so far as the aims and the lines of policy of both countries are inherent in the nature of things (*e.g.*, their general strategical needs) or their public declarations (*e.g.*, the white paper) (and incidentally, I should personally like both the French and ourselves to come through the war, if we possibly can, without making any more promises to anybody about the future of the "Arab countries").

3. Nor does the existence of co-operation mean that the two Governments see eye to eye in every particular. That would be manifestly impossible. We may have occasional qualms as to whether the French are not being too strict in Syria. The French may have qualms as to whether we are not too lax in Iraq. But there is also a recognition of the fact that in the long run French methods pay when worked by the French, and British methods when worked by the

(1) A copy of this letter has been given to the French Embassy.

British, and that in any case [illegible] is necessary to back the other up in whatever he decides, after full reflex on, to be the best methods for territory where he is mainly concerned

4 But none of this means that His Majesty's Government and the French Government are not in agreement It is true to say that they are in agreement to agree Every responsible Minister and official in both countries recognises that they must sink or swim together; that it is as necessary to work in unison in the Middle East as in every other part of the world, and that, if ever the time were to come for remodelling the Middle East, they must remodel it together

Yours ever

LACY BAGGALLAY

E 1930 236 65] No 382

Viscount Halifax to Sir B Newton (Baghdad)

By Bag

(No 30 Saving)
(Telegraphic) *En clair* *Foreign Office, May 23, 1940*

YOUR telegram No. 147 (of 6th May Bagdad Haifa road

Lieutenant Colonel N L Hammond R.E. who will be in charge of construction operations, is being instructed to get in touch with you direct on all routine questions of detail connected with the road. I understand that he will proceed shortly to Bagdad where he will be able to explain programme and details of requirements.

2 The co-operation of the Iraqi Government is particularly desired on the following points

(a) Enlistment of suitably qualified personnel in the requisite numbers to ensure rapid exe[illegible] tinuity of the work, with permission to employ other than Iraqi personnel where such a course is found essential.

(b) Relaxation of passport and customs formalities between Iraq and Transjordan in the case of non Iraqi subjects who are employed by the above-named Commander, Royal Engineers, and who are in possession of a special works pass issued by him

(c) Provision of necessary police protection along the route and in camp areas, and of medical care for labourers, &c

(d) Facilities for water supply and communications

3 I trust that it will be possible to make arrangements on these lines although it is not yet possible to suggest numbers of personnel involved because detailed arrangements depend upon availability of plant. You may if you think it desirable, explain the position now to the Iraqi authorities in order that the [illegible] way for speedy co-operation when the time comes. In any case [illegible] Hammond all assistance in your power when he reaches Bagdad

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 30, Saving (for M E I C))

[E 1930 236 65] No. 383

Sir B Newton to Viscount Halifax—(Received May 16)

(No. 105)
My Lord, *Baghdad, May 6, 1940*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 140 of the 1st May, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copies of the letter which I handed to the Minister for Foreign Affairs [illegible] telegram No. 103 of the 25th April and of the Minister's reply which I received five days later

2 It will be seen that, though the Iraqi Government express appreciation [illegible] the Bagdad-Transjordan section of the Bagdad Haifa route, they regret that they can make no monetary contribution to this cost as they have no funds available for this purpose. In regard to future maintenance, they declare that, as the road will be an Iraqi road of vital importance, it is obvious that they will accept the obligation for this work which will, they estimate, cost from 65,000 to 75,000 dinars a year

3 I have discussed this reply with the Minister for Foreign Affairs He explained that, so long as the Iraqi Government had money to spare, they continued year by year to improve the desert route and that if they had the means they would certainly go on building it now The hard fact, however, was that [illegible] I spoke of the possibility of help in kind by means of the free transfer to His Majesty's Government of suitable plant and equipment and mentioned, in particular, the surplus tractors, road making machines and lorries which I understood the Iraqi Railways had for disposal Nuri Pasha gave an encouraging reception to this proposal and promised to find out what plant could be made available from the Railways and other departments. I am hopeful that the Iraqi Government will act reasonably in the matter, and I do not think that there is [illegible] possibly be disinclined to transfer it or put it at our disposal altogether free of charge

4 I also asked the Minister for Foreign Affairs whether he could tell me what exactly was meant by the last paragraph of his letter concerning the future maintenance of the road. He said that the feeling of the Cabinet had been that it would be unbecoming for the Iraqi Government to enter into anything [illegible] road. It would clearly be a road of vital importance, and it went without saying that a responsible Government would look after the vital interests of the country He had no doubt that the present Government would keep up the road and felt satisfied that any later Government would take the same view of their responsibilities. He was sure that except for unavoidable reasons, no Iraqi Government would neglect to make adequate yearly budget provision for the maintenance of the road after it had been completed

5 I urged the need for a clearer assurance, but he thought that his colleagues would be most reluctant for reasons of principle to say more than they had authorised him to say in his letter Mr Swan the Inspector General of the Customs, who is sometimes consulted on financial affairs by the Iraqi Government has confirmed to me that the outlook for the finances of the country is, in fact, heavily clouded just now by the high rate of military expenditure. He felt that, even if more specific assurances in regard to the maintenance of the road could be extracted, they would be of little greater practical value than those already obtained

6 I have noticed that, in the first paragraph of your Lordship's telegram No. 115, it is stated that, according to present intention, army organisations will continue the road from the Transjordan frontier to Rutbah and that the work from there to Falluja will be carried out by contractors. I hope that this does not mean that it has been found necessary to change the original decision (men[illegible] Bagdad up to the same standard. There is a section of 20 miles of completely unmade track to the east of Falluja, where the surface is no better than the average in [illegible] to be a great pity if the very last link in the road from Haifa to Bagdad were to be left uncompleted

7 I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassador at Cairo, to the Combined Middle East Intelligence Centre, Cairo, and to the Air Officer Commanding, Habbaniya.

I have, &c
BASIL NEWTON

Enclosure 1 in No. 383

Sir B. Newton to Iraq Minister for Foreign Affairs

[illegible] *Bagdad, April 27, 1940*

[illegible] A in a note of the 9th October, 1939, your Excellency's department informed me that the Iraqi authorities concerned attached much importance to the metalling of the sector of the Bagdad-Haifa route lying between Bagdad and the Transjordan frontier and enquired whether it was possible for His Majesty's Government to help in its construction.

2. His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have carefully considered the matter and have authorised me to inform your Excellency that they share the views of the Iraqi Government regarding the importance of this road and that in response to the Iraqi Government's request they are willing to arrange for the construction of this sector of the route to the same standard as that part of the route already under construction between Haifa and the Transjordan frontier.

3. It is estimated that the cost of this undertaking may amount to about £650,000, and to ensure its rapid completion to the same standard throughout its length my Government wish themselves to organise and carry out the necessary work. His Majesty's Government consider that this road is essential to the common interests of both countries and are prepared to bear the initial cost of building it. In view, however, of its great value to Iraq, they trust that the Iraqi Government will be prepared at an early date to make a substantial contribution to the capital outlay involved and also, after the completion of the road, to accept entire responsibility for its regular maintenance.

4. I shall be glad to receive the earliest possible assurances on these two points. Meanwhile, I shall be grateful if I may be informed forthwith of the concurrence of the Iraqi Government in the immediate execution of the work by His Majesty's Government. Contract negotiations have reached a stage when such permission is essential, while it will also be appreciated that it is of the utmost importance to accomplish as much work as possible before the next rains begin.

I avail, &c.
BASIL NEWTON

Enclosure 2 in No. 383

Iraq Minister for Foreign Affairs to Sir B. Newton

Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Western Department

Your Excellency, *Bagdad, April 30, 1940*

WITH reference to your Excellency's letter No. 170 of the 27th April concerning the construction of the road between Bagdad and Transjordan, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that the proposals of His Majesty's Government concerning this matter have been submitted to the Cabinet who, after careful consideration, have decided as follows:—

1. To invoke your Excellency's good offices to communicate to His Majesty's Government the thanks of the Iraqi Government for their willingness to undertake this beneficial work and for their agreement to spend the necessary money for the work of construction.

2. Your Excellency knows already that the Iraqi Government had themselves undertaken for several years the improvement and betterment of portions of the road between Bagdad and Rutbah, and that they spent on this work a considerable sum of money, having regard to their total budget resources. But the work was suspended and the improvements were not completed up to the end of the road on account of the financial difficulties with which the Iraqi Government have for some time been confronted and the effects of which are still felt up to the present time. For this reason the Government greatly regret that it is not possible for them to participate in the initial expenditure of the construction of this road.

3. But, as regards the maintenance of the above-mentioned road, it has been found that it will cost annually between 10 per cent. to 12 per cent. of its capital cost (that is to say, from 65,000 to 75,000 dinars a year). Nevertheless, the Iraqi Government do not regard it as necessary to mention their promise to do this, since it is obvious that they will undertake its maintenance, for it will be an Iraqi road of vital importance.

Accept, Excellency, the assurance of my highest consideration and esteem.

NURI SAID

E 2170/2170/89] No. 384

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received June 21.)

(No. 279.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, June 20, 1940*

FATE of Syria and Lebanon is a matter of great importance to Iraq. As a result of events in France any one of undermentioned developments may follow:—

(1) France will remain in occupation of these countries but no longer as our Ally.
(2) France may withdraw from Syria and Lebanon.
(3) France may hand over Syria and Lebanon to Germany or Italy.
(4) Italy and Germany may try to bid against us for Arab support and declare independence of Syria and Lebanon under tutelage.
(5) France or French forces may continue to fight outside France and endeavour to hold Syria and Lebanon.

2. First possibility might call for no immediate positive action in Iraq. Second possibility would create dangerous vacuum [? which would] have to be filled. This might be done by our enemies, by Turks or by ourselves. If our enemies [? held] Syria and Lebanon our position in Iraq and presumably in Palestine would be seriously menaced. If these territories were handed over to Turks Arab reaction in Iraq towards us would become dangerously bitter. British occupation of these territories would offer solution, but to be fully effective would need to be accompanied by political action to win Arab approval and support. For this purpose it would be desirable that declaration should be made to the effect that His Majesty's Government intended at once (*a*) to summon Syrian and [Lebanese] Parliaments, (*b*) conclude treaty of alliance with both States on the lines of Anglo-Iraq Treaty, (*c*) help all Arab States that wish to do so to establish closer mutual relations (proviso safeguarding white paper policy [? for] Palestine might have to be included). Third possibility if realised, [illegible] again be valuable and could be sought by means of declaration on lines mentioned above. Fourth possibility would require counter-action which might take the form of attempt to make a better bid for Arab support on lines of declaration already mentioned. In [? the case of] competition our control in Iraq would be a valuable asset. Fifth possibility. In this event in view of collapse of [? French] armies in Europe it would be desirable to seek to strengthen Arab support for the Allies and action by French Government as suggested at (*a*) and (*b*) and [? joint] [? Anglo-French] declaration as at (*c*) would be of great value [illegible] dislike to create Arab *bloc* along the greater part of her southern frontier but perhaps this difficulty need be neither insuperable nor in any case decisive.

3. Ibn Saud might also have suspicions but these could perhaps be allayed [illegible] declaration on the lines I have suggested and guaranteed his own position.

[illegible] No. 24, Angora, No. 11, Jerusalem, No. 37.)

E 2170 2170 89] No. 385

Sir B Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received June 21.)

[illegible]

Baghdad June 20, 1940

MY telegram No. 279.

The Regent, Nuri Pasha, and no doubt all political leaders are asking anxiously but also hopefully about the future of Syria and Lebanon. On the one hand they fear an occupation by Italy, Germany or Turkey. On the other hand they hope for a British occupation leading to realisation of Arab aspirations for independence of these countries, and for some kind of federal union with Iraq and between Arab countries. This last might include Egypt and perhaps be associated in some manner with the British Commonwealth.

2. Emphasising that he was speaking privately as a friend, Nuri Pasha called the other day to voice such hopes and aspirations. He also pleaded for [illegible] No. 190 of 26th May on which I commented in part 2 of my telegram No. 193. Nuri Pasha made it clear that there was no question of making conditions for Arab assistance and that all responsible leaders fully realised that their vital interests lay with Great Britain. During the last war promises made, although unfortunately lacking in clarity, had greatly assisted in rallying the Arabs. Something similar but less ambiguous in fulfilment of earlier hopes was now required. In view of the latest developments he trusted that the declaration would now go further than was suggested in previous appeal.

Repeated to Cairo, No. 99 (for M.E.I.C.), and Angora, No. 12.)

E 2209 2170 89] No. 386

Sir H Knatchbull Hugessen to Viscount Halifax.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 707.)
(Telegraphic.)

Angora, July 5, 1940

MY telegram No. 650.

Minister for Foreign Affairs informs me that Nuri Pasha was somewhat vague in his conversations here at first, but was understood to be advocating some kind of federation which would include Iraq, Syria and other Arabic countries and also Turkey. President of the Republic, to whom Nuri propounded this idea, was not encouraging, and advised Nuri to be extremely prudent. Turkish Government maintain their guarded attitude and Minister for Foreign Affairs [illegible] the eliminating of Turkey. Moreover he did not think various Arabic States were sufficiently cohesive among themselves to be capable of being included in any such federation. I told Minister for Foreign Affairs that I understand Nuri had been [illegible] this scheme for a long time and that at one time he wished to include Egypt as well. Minister for Foreign Affairs replied that Nuri had told him that he had cherished this idea for twenty-five years.

2. There seems to be an agreement on the desirability of keeping Italians out of Syria, and also agreement to keep in touch and to compare notes if necessary by another meeting should situation demand it.

(Repeated to Cairo, Baghdad, and Beirut.)

E 2289 2289 31] No. 387

(1)

Professor Gibb to Lord Lloyd.—(Received in Foreign Office, July 17, under cover of letter of July 15 from Sir J Shuckburgh, Colonial Office, to Mr Baggallay.)

(Confidential.)

St John's College
Oxford July 12, 1940

Dear Lord Lloyd,

AT a private meeting yesterday afternoon with Professor Brodetsky and Mr Leonard Stein the discussion turned on whether, in view of the gravity of the situation in the Middle East, there was any possibility of reaching a working agreement which might serve as the basis for an ultimate settlement of the Arab-Jewish problem. It was agreed that the time had come for a fresh effort to reach an understanding along broader and more hopeful approaches, and it was thought that the general lines of an agreement could be found in (*a*) the linking up of Palestine with other Arab States in a union or federation, (*b*) guarantees for Jewish autonomy within an area of reasonable size, and (*c*) Arab-Jewish military co-operation.

Professor Brodetsky and Mr Stein felt that this offered a policy which could be accepted by Zionists, now that so many illusions had been destroyed, but they insisted that speedy and resolute action was essential for the success of any scheme on such lines as these. As, however, the initiative must in their view come from H.M. Government, they urged me to convey to you informally their willingness to reopen discussions with the Colonial Office.

I am, &c.
H. A. R. GIBB.

Lord Lloyd to Professor Gibb

[illegible]

Dear Professor Gibb, [illegible] 29 1940

I HAVE [illegible] discussion [illegible] at all times to see representatives of the Jewish Agency and to consider carefully what they have to say to us. But I think that it may be well if at the outset I state the position, as it appears to us here, with complete frankness.

I am by no means out of sympathy with the ideal of Arab federation, and I realise that such a development might well assist in the solution of the Arab-Jewish problem. I incline to the opinion held by my predecessor and by many others who have had to deal with the difficult problems of the Middle East, that some form of federation is the ultimate destiny of the Arab States which formerly belonged to the Ottoman Empire. Geographical, economic and strategical factors all point to the advantages of some kind of union. I also appreciate that in such an event the Jews might be able to secure a fuller realisation of their aspirations in Palestine than present conditions permit.

Where I cannot agree is with the view that in the matter of Arab federation the initiative must come from the British Government. On the contrary, it seems to me essential that the impetus should come from the Arab peoples themselves, and I am convinced that any attempt by the Government to initiate such a movement would not only defeat its own end, but, bearing in mind the complication of the problem by dynastic rivalries, religious differences and conflicts of political parties, would involve us in most dangerous embarrassments. This consideration acquires increased gravity in the light of recent events and their bearing upon the situation in French mandated territory.

Looking at the Middle East as it is at present, I must confess that the prospects of federation appear to me to be somewhat remote, but I cannot believe that any British Government would stand in the way of a movement that commanded general Arab support or would intervene except for the purpose of securing essential British interests or the fulfilment of our international [illegible]

As regards the Arab [illegible] Majesty's Government [illegible] ts of their obligation [illegible] they [illegible] Arabs [illegible] resources, [illegible] certainly be no [illegible]

Yours sincerely,
LLOYD.

E 2027 953 65 No. 388

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received July 20.)

(No. 375.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, July 19, 1940.*

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs told me yesterday that Iraqi Minister at [illegible] him by the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, His Majesty's Ambassador speaking personally and unofficially, had enquired whether Turkey would object to union of Arab countries, including Syria and Iraq. Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs had replied that Turkey would have no objection to such a development.

2. General Nuri went on to mention that stories of Amir Abdullah's interview with Syrian leaders (see my telegram No. 329) and a message from Amir Abdullah sent through Iraqi Consul General, Jerusalem, on 24th June, informing Iraqi Government that His Highness was convinced that His Majesty's Government were ready to support a movement for union of Syria, Transjordan, Palestine and Sanjaq [sic]. [illegible] These various reports suggested possibility that His Majesty's Government [illegible] were considering new Arab policy, and he would be glad of any information I could give him.

3. I said I had not corroborated and rather doubted whether His Majesty's Government could decide or even seriously consider their future policy at this stage of the war. Nuri has, however, evidently been pressed by his colleagues to try to find out what is going on, and I [illegible] would be grateful for your comment.

4. Yusuf Yasin continues to show much curiosity regarding the Amir of Transjordan but seems satisfied that all is likely to remain quiet in Syria, and that in any case the Amir would do nothing contrary to the wishes of His Majesty's Government.

(Repeated to Jerusalem, No. 53, and Angora, No. 23.)

E 2027 953 65] No. 389

Sir H. Knatchbull Hugessen to Viscount Halifax.—(Received July 22.)

(No. [illegible])
(Telegraphic.) *Angora, July 21, 1940.*

BAGDAD telegram No. 375, first paragraph.

I have no recollection of having spoken thus, and can find nothing in my records of conversation with the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

2. Nuri touched on the subject with me—see my telegrams Nos. 650 and 690—and the attitude of the Turkish Government to Nuri's idea is indicated in my telegram No. 707.

3. One further thing is certain, namely, that the Turkish Government made it perfectly clear to Nuri that they would insist on acting in complete consultation and conjunction with His Majesty's Government in connexion with any of the points raised by Nuri.

4. Beyond that I do not think that the Turkish Government would entertain any objection to union of Arabic countries. Minister for Foreign Affairs clearly [illegible] he would group undecipherable] The one thing on which the Turkish Government are clear is that they do not want to be included in any such union or federation.

(Repeated to Bagdad, No. 28, and Jerusalem (unnumbered).)

E 2027 953 65] No. 390

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received August 2.)

(No. 397.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, August 1, 1940.*

IN response to a directive given by official press bureau articles are now appearing in press advocating pan-Arab congress in Bagdad.

2. Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister of Finance have both told me that they think it unlikely that congress could be held during hot weather, and

showed little liking for the idea. Nuri Pasha said that it had Egyptian backing. It is probably promoted by either Prime Minister or Minister of Defence, or both, and if Prime Minister remains in office something of the sort may be attempted later in the year. It might, of course, provide convenient platform for launching scheme for Arab confederation.

(Repeated to Government of India, No. 8, Saving; Jedda, No. 5, Saving; Cairo, No. 19, Saving (for Middle East Intelligence Centre); Jerusalem, No. [illegible] 43], Saving; Beirut, No. 4, Saving (for Damascus).)

E 2027 953 65 No. 391

Viscount Halifax to Sir B. Newton (Bagdad.)

(No. 306.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, August 4, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 375, of 19th July, and Angora telegrams Nos. 830 and 846 (of 21st July and 24th July respectively). Future of Arab States.

You may inform General Nuri that, although they would naturally view with sympathy any projects for collaboration between Arab States which would be acceptable to all these States themselves, His Majesty's Government do not think that the time has come for them to take any initiative. The only action which [illegible] agreement between Syria and the Lebanon on the one hand, and Palestine and Transjordan on the other, so that commerce across the frontier can be resumed.

2. For your guidance, His Majesty's Government are satisfied that Amir Abdullah would take no important step without prior consultation with him.

(Repeated to Angora, No. 694, Cairo, No. 741, and Jerusalem, No. 607.)

[E 2432 953 65] No. 392

Mr. Stonehewer Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received August 17.)

(No. 189.)
(Telegraphic.) *Jedda, August 16, 1940.*

MY telegram No. 186.

The King has sent me message about Nuri's activities, which he views with grave misgiving as being likely merely to lead to confusion. The King has heard that Nuri intends to visit Egypt and understands his object to be, firstly, further discussions of the situation in Syria, Palestine and, secondly, to arrange for an Arab conference to be held to discuss the Arab problem as a whole.

2. Ibn Saud feels that no useful purpose can be served by calling an Arab conference. Palestine is a matter for His Majesty's Government. Syria is in the hands of the French, who are merely the mouthpieces of Italy and Germany. Conference would probably seek to discuss matters with German and Italian Governments, and Ibn Saud could not, he says, countenance any such reference to Britain's enemies, as it would be an unfriendly act and inconsistent with the assurances he has given to His Majesty's Government.

3. Ibn Saud begs for the earliest possible expression of His Majesty's Government's views, as he must decide on the policy he is to adopt. He feels that in order to avoid Nuri's project being put into effect and the possibility of Italy and Germany being approached, His Majesty's Government should decide now on the future fate of the Arabs. Though Karmakarn, who brought me the message, could not tell me what was in Ibn Saud's mind when he wrote "fate of the Arabs," he thought he was referring not to Syria and Palestine, but to the Arab question as a whole, on which he expressed his views to Wavell in November last (please see memorandum No. 162, 20th November, 1939).

4. When I have received replies to this telegram, and to my telegram No. 175 of 7th August, I propose to visit Amir Feisal in Taif and communicate them to him direct.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 62, Bagdad, No. 53, Jerusalem, No. 45, Angora, No. 2, and Beirut, No. 4.)

[E 2289/2289/31] No. 393.

Viscount Halifax to Sir B. Newton (Bagdad).

(No. 416.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, August* 20, 1940.

YOUR telegram No. 428 [of 6th August: Arab federation].

Generally speaking, it is important to avoid giving impression that views of His Majesty's Government necessarily constitute obstacle to federation, whether this idea (which may mean anything from a combination of States or territories each retaining their individual identity to complete political amalgamation) is conceived as applying to a large or a small part of present Arab world. General line of British officials who may be tackled on subject should be that, while there are obviously many difficulties in the way, His Majesty's Government are perfectly willing that anyone who is interested should go ahead and work out a practical scheme. If this is done His Majesty's Government are only likely to intervene in order to secure essential British interests or fulfilment of their international obligations. Scheme must, however, have general Arab support, *i.e.*, support of all leading Arab groups.

2. I realise that question at once arises as to what essential interests and international obligations His Majesty's Government have in mind. His Majesty's Government would be unlikely to commit themselves on these points unless by some unlikely chance it seemed that a practical scheme was being shaped by responsible representatives of Arab Government. In that case His Majesty's Government might think it better to give representatives some guidance rather than have a scheme which they could not approve thrust before them.

(Repeated to Angora, No. 799; Cairo, No. 822; Jerusalem, No. 738; Jedda, No. 127; and Beirut, No. 83.)

[E 2432/953/65] No. 394.

Viscount Halifax to Mr. Stonehewer-Bird (Jedda).

(No. 131.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, August* 22, 1940.

YOUR telegram No. 189 [of 16th August: Arab Conference].

For my views on Shabwa and proposed *démarche* to Vichy Government regarding Syria, see my telegrams No. 124 and No. 121 (of 18th August and 16th August respectively).

2. As for Arab congress, I should explain that, according to information supplied on 13th August by Saudi Arabian Minister here, Ibn Saud felt that before any general discussion took place it would be well if Iraqi Government were to settle various questions in dispute between himself and Iraq which were supposed to have been arranged some time ago (Nejd Shammar were still encamped on boundary and in receipt of pay from Iraqi Government). Minister understood that, if these outstanding questions were settled, His Majesty would be willing to send delegate for discussions with Iraqi and Egyptian Governments if so desired, provided it were first clearly understood what was to be discussed, and also that whole project and subjects for discussion were approved by His Majesty's Government.

3. Views of His Majesty's Government are as follows: If meeting were to follow precedent of Bludan Conference, it would include non-official delegates and result of its deliberations would be made public. It seems inevitable that such a congress would come largely under influence of extremist refugees, Palestinian and Syrian, especially as it is most unlikely that French authorities would in present circumstances allow any Syrian politicians now in mandated territories to attend it. Further, much of its time would probably be devoted to expounding refugees' grievances, thus providing first-class material for enemy propaganda. In any case it would involve public discussion of matters of the greatest delicacy by private individuals who are not in a position to have full knowledge of situation in all its aspects. His Majesty's Government would take strongest exception to such a project, which seems to them very dangerous.

4. If proposal is for confidential discussions between representatives of Arab Governments, these particular objections would not arise. His Majesty's Government fully sympathise with natural desire of Arabs to consult together

on matters of common interest and in principle they would welcome such a step. Practical difficulty is, however, that General Nuri seems, as His Majesty has heard, to be taking a most imprudent line, although I doubt whether he would go so far as to suggest to His Majesty or to the Egyptian Government that they should make an approach to the German or Italian Governments. General Nuri apparently regards Iraqi army as only military force of consequence in Middle East and seems to be lending his support to scheme for immediate federation of Iraq, Transjordan and Palestine (no doubt in expectation that Syria would in due course join them) with Saudi Arabia if His Majesty is willing to co-operate, but otherwise without. He has not described his project to His Majesty's Government, but they understand that it includes customs union and common Arab army. It is extremely difficult to see how such a scheme could be made to work, but in any case it is quite unacceptable to His Majesty's Government if only because it apparently pays very little regard to the views of Ibn Saud.

5. Incidentally, it is not clear whether underlying principles of federation are fully understood. Normally federation implies partial union for economic and other reasons of independent States which have considerable common interests but which are unwilling to surrender their autonomy in internal administrative matters. They desire to co-operate for defence, customs, communications and similar purposes only. This involves creation of a federal administrative centre and a common federal fund derived from federal taxes. Federal Government is paramount in certain defined spheres, while Governments of component States retain their local powers in other spheres. There should ideally be no dominating partner in federation. If, therefore, in present proposal predominance of one partner or of certain personalities is contemplated, it would seem that the States concerned are not ripe for federation and could better achieve closer co-operation by means of bilateral or multilateral agreements freely negotiated.

6. It has always been the aim of His Majesty's Government, so far as lies in their power, to promote friendly relations between the Arab States, and they would view with sympathy practical proposals to increase co-operation, provided that such proposals had support of all leading Arab groups (see my telegram No. 417 to Bagdad of 18th August). They cannot, however, give their support to any scheme which would favour one Arab State at the expense of the others, and they assume that Ibn Saud is in agreement with them over this.

7. They will themselves endeavour to bring Iraqi Government to more reasonable frame of mind, and are content to leave it entirely to Ibn Saud to decide how best to proceed meanwhile. It seems to them that His Majesty would be fully justified in declining to take part in any general discussions with Iraqi Government until outstanding questions between two countries had been finally settled. They themselves feel extremely doubtful whether such discussions are likely to lead to any positive results when Italy has not yet been defeated, when there is no stable Government in France with whom negotiations could be conducted, and when Iraqi Government seem more interested in extension of their own influence than in co-operating with His Majesty's Government. His Majesty's Government would, however, quite understand if Ibn Saud preferred to agree to confidential meeting of representatives of his own and other Arab Governments at an early date, if only in order to ascertain in more detail what the Iraqi Government really have in mind, but in that case they would urge that he should insist on being told beforehand what subjects it was proposed to discuss. They greatly appreciate Ibn Saud's message and would naturally be glad to exchange views with His Majesty before any meeting took place. They are fully confident that if the Iraqi Government suggested any approach to Germany or Italy, they would meet with no support at all either from His Majesty or from the Egyptian Government.

8. Please inform Ibn Saud on lines of paragraphs 3–7 above. You will see that I have not attempted to define policy of His Majesty's Government towards "fate of the Arabs." For reasons which I have set out in paragraph 7 and which will, I hope, seem to Ibn Saud inadequate, that seems to me in present circumstances an impossible task.

(Repeated to Angora, No. 821; Bagdad, No. 431; Cairo, No. 845; Beirut, No. 89; and Jerusalem, No. 754.)

[E 2511/953/65] No. 395.

Sir M. Lampson to Viscount Halifax.—(Received August 26.)

(No. 975.)
(Telegraphic.) *Cairo, August 25, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 131 to Jedda.

I should have recorded in my earlier telegrams that the Prime Minister was definitely inclined to pooh-pooh the idea of any direct Egyptian interest as an "Arab State." In his talks with Nuri he limited the scope of Egyptian help to the moral field, lending technical experts for the development of Iraq such as irrigation, &c. I did not sound the Prime Minister regarding an idea of an Arab conference, but his attitude above described [? had] some bearing on his probable reaction to any suggestion of an Arab conference.

2. On the other hand, we must always remember that Nuri is hand in glove with Ali Maher, with whom he had close contact during his visit here. Ali Maher and his clique (Azzam, Saleh Harb, and company) are rabid pro-Arabists, and undoubtedly hoped to see Egypt taking a prominent, if not dominant, rôle in any discussions, and they still have ways and means (specially their close association with the Palace, which continues unabated) to make their presence felt.

(Repeated to Baghdad, No. 56; Jerusalem, No. 73; Jedda, No. 38; Angora, No. 74; and Beirut, No. 87.)

[E 2572/953/65] No. 396.

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received September 1.)

(No. 505.)
(Telegraphic.) *Baghdad, August 31, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 418.

Owing to the indisposition of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, I was not able to act on your instructions until 29th August, when I called on him unofficially at Ministry. I began by referring to his letter of 25th May, and, after recalling that His Majesty's Government had always done what they could to meet the representations of Arab States, I said that I had been instructed to inform him that His Majesty's Government saw no reason to make any change in their policy for Palestine as laid down in May 1939.

2. I then referred to enquiry that he had made in July (my telegram No. 375) concerning a question which he had heard that His Majesty's Ambassador at Angora had put to Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs. I said that Sir H. Knatchbull-Hugessen had no recollection of ever having made the enquiry attributed to [group omitted], but General Nuri would know from experience that it had always been the aim of His Majesty's Government so far as lay in their power to promote friendly relations between Arab States, and I could assure him that His Majesty's Government would view with sympathy any prospects for collaboration between these States which would be acceptable to themselves and enjoy the support of all leading Arab countries. I closed by giving him the substance of first paragraph of your telegram No. 416.

3. Nuri Pasha asked whether my message indicated that His Majesty's Government expected the Iraqi Government to take action, and, if so, in what manner. I explained carefully that it did not indicate anything of the kind, and was only intended to remove any impression that might exist that His Majesty's Government's views necessarily constituted an obstacle to the federation.

4. Minister for Foreign Affairs then said that in his opinion it was impracticable to prepare any plan for the federation until Palestine and Syria [group omitted] their independence or at least a representative Government, and, speaking personally, he deplored the failure of His Majesty's Government to take what he described as few easy steps to win the Arabs to their cause. I replied with the main points in the last paragraph of your telegram No. 419, emphasising the short-sighted folly of these Iraqis who overlook the substance which, thanks to us, they enjoy in Iraq and snatched at the shadow in Syria and Palestine.

5. General impression left on me by the interview was that, apart from being physically tired and unwell, Minister for Foreign Affairs has returned from Egypt a good deal abashed.

6. Record of interview follows by bag. I left nothing in writing with the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 153; Angora, No. 44; Jerusalem, No. 78; Jedda, No. 38; and Beirut, No. 28.)

[E 2594/953/65] No. 397.

Mr. Stonehewer-Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received September 4.)

(No. 203.)
(Telegraphic.) *Jedda, September 2, 1940.*

YOUR telegram No. 131.

I spoke to Amir Feisal at Taif and left an aide-mémoire with him. At a later interview he offered the following observations based mainly on a message he had received from Ibn Saud.

2. He and the King were very grateful for *exposé* of His Majesty's Government's views. Ibn Saud saw no point in holding a conference at this juncture; Iraqi Government appeared to be composed of individuals each working for his own ends rather than in the interests of Arab world; position of Egypt was difficult; Syria was an unknown quantity which could not be properly represented by anyone; policy in Palestine and Transjordan was the concern of His Majesty's Government; Imam would, he was convinced, always follow his, Ibn Saud's lead. Matters would be discussed and opinions expressed which could not fail to embarrass His Majesty's Government. Ibn Saud thought that Nuri had only suggested conference with a view to his own self aggrandisement. Ibn Saud could demonstrate to His Majesty's Government that he did not wish to play any dominating rôle or interfere in affairs of Arab States, but as a Moslem he was anxious to do all in his power to help so long as he was not asked to do anything which in his opinion was contrary to interests of Arabs or of His Majesty's Government. As the future of Arab States lay in the hands of His Majesty's Government and was dependent on a British victory, which could be brought nearer by full Arab co-operation, it would be well for His Majesty's Government to counter enemy propaganda by attracting sympathy and goodwill of all Arabs. Ibn Saud did not wish to tabulate any views on future fate of Arabs, which he felt was a matter for His Majesty's Government to decide in due course. Amir Feisal did not think that time was ripe for [? questioning]; what was desirable was good understanding among Arab States and community of aims.

3. Asked in what way His Majesty's Government could "attract Arabs," Amir replied that Ibn Saud was referring to Palestine which alone stood in way of a perfect understanding between His Majesty's Government and Arab world. Though Ibn Saud was convinced that His Majesty's Government genuinely intended to implement the white paper, many Arabs did not believe it and unconsciously immigration figures were lending colour in these people's eyes to enemy insinuations that His Majesty's Government's real aim was to form a Jewish State in Palestine.

4. In reply to Amir Feisal's question as to attitude of Egyptian Government to Nuri's proposals, I said Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs had received a cold douche (Cairo telegram No. 932). Amir was pleased and relieved.

5. At the end of the interview Amir said that he had been expressing his personal views and the views of the King based on a telegraphed summary of my aide-mémoire. When King had received Feisal's despatch covering full text, he thought he would reply at length in writing.

(Repeated to Cairo, No. 66; Baghdad, No. 50; Jerusalem, No. 50; Angora, No. 4; Beirut, No. 6.)

[E 2620/953/65] No. 398.

Mr. Stonehewer-Bird to Viscount Halifax.—(Received September 9.)

(No. 209.)
(Telegraphic.) *Jedda, September 7, 1940.*

MY telegram No. 203.

I have now received Ibn Saud's reply in writing referred to in last paragraph.

2. King states that while he is not opposed in principle to the idea of a conference, he does not wish to attend conference, which he feels is doomed to failure. Proposed conference would inevitably be harmful to British cause and would, moreover, place him in embarrassing situation; if he supported claim for independence, which would certainly be made by some of the delegates, he might find himself in opposition to His Majesty's Government; if he determined to support such claims he would be criticised for working in British rather than in Arab interests. If, however, His Majesty's Government were in favour of a conference being held, Ibn Saud would send a delegate, but would wish to be advised in advance on exact nature of His Majesty's Government's difficulties in Palestine, Yemen and Hadr[ram]aut, and limits to which His Majesty's Government would be prepared to go to reach an understanding with the Arabs of those territories.

3. He would also wish to be informed, with complete frankness, of aims His Majesty's Government would wish to attain; so informed he could pursue those aims at the conference, convinced, as he is, that His Majesty's Government have only welfare and peace of Arabs at heart.

4. Ibn Saud would, moreover, wish His Majesty's Government to lay down, in consultation with States who intended to send delegates to the conference, exact procedure to be followed.

5. If he has avoided taking part in any of the recent conversation(s) it is because he has been afraid of becoming involved in some policy contrary to British interests, for he is convinced that the promoters of this idea of a conference were actuated by purely personal motives. His own policy is based on the conviction that His Majesty's Government and Arab States should work "as one hand" for the preservation of their common interests.

(Repeated to Cairo (M.I.C.E.), Bagdad, Jerusalem, Angora, Beirut, Saving (by bag).)

[E 2283/2029/65] No. 399.

Sir B. Newton to Viscount Halifax.—(Received September 12.)

(No. 362.)

HIS Majesty's Ambassador at Bagdad presents his compliments to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and, with reference to Bagdad telegram No. 408 of 2nd August, 1940, has the honour to transmit to him a copy of a letter with enclosure dated the 31st July, 1940, from the British Adviser to the Minister of Interior, Bagdad, to Sir Basil Newton—pan-Arab activity in Iraq.

Bagdad, August 3, 1940.

Enclosure in No. 399.

Mr. Edmonds to Sir B. Newton.

(Secret.)
My dear Ambassador, *Bagdad, July 31, 1940.*

I SEND you a note I have evolved on present pan-Arab activity in case you may find it of interest.

Yours sincerely,
C. J. EDMONDS.

Sub-Enclosure in No. 399.

Present Pan-Arab Activity in Iraq.

(A)

I HAD a talk with Nuri Pasha this morning about the Arab question as viewed by the Iraqi Government at the present time.

2. He said that he and his principal colleagues felt that the moment had now come to push forward with the idea of an Arab Confederation of Iraq, Transjordan, Palestine and, if possible, Saudiya; they would not worry about Syria for the present; if the Confederation took shape Syria would drop into it like a ripe date.

3. The closer union, he said, could be achieved in the following fields:—

(a) Extension of the Anglo-Iraqi alliance to include Transjordan, Palestine and, if King Aboul Aziz agreed, Saudiya.
(b) Removal of all customs barriers for local produce and manufactures.
(c) Unified Public Instruction (without prejudice to Jewish cultural autonomy in Palestine).
(d) Unified currency with currency notes in the name of the Confederation.
(e) Common system of military training.
(f) Development of inter-State communications by co-ordinated programme, and so on.

4. I asked about the conference now being advocated so persistently in the press. I presumed on the instructions of the Government. He said that he thought the idea had spread across from Egypt, and that it had been mooted, or at least given its new impetus, by Colonel Newcombe on his discussions there.

5. His idea was that His Majesty's Government, recalling the relevant passages in the Peel report and other statements made from time to time, should, in some appropriate form—a declaration or other—take the initiative to set the Closer-Union ball rolling.

6. Subject to the considerations set forth in paragraphs 7 to 9 below, there would be no difficulty in fitting Palestine still under mandate into the Confederation; a glance at the subjects mentioned in paragraph 3 would show that this was so.

7. As regards Palestine he said that everybody, including the members of the Arab Higher Committee here, accepted the actual policy laid down in the white paper, including the Jewish National Home as there defined, the maximum proportion laid down for the Jewish population and the limitation of immigration, but that they had two complaints as regards the application of the policy under the second and third heads of the statement of policy:

(a) The failure to prevent illegal immigration which had already passed 50,000 out of the 75,000 to be ultimately allowed. (I think the implication is that as the British authorities have failed so far effectively to prevent the immigration, they will not suddenly and miraculously be granted ability to prevent it when the 75,000 limit has been reached; if they intended to stop at the 75,000 they ought to and would have found means to control the illegal immigration earlier. In this connexion it has been suggested to me from another quarter that not only should the number of illegal immigrants be set off against the quota as at present, but that the illegal immigrants should also be regarded still as refugees and not as immigrants entitled to acquire land, &c.)

(b) The manner of application of the Land Sales Regulations; this they thought should be guided by the standards laid down for the Arabs in the Woodhead report.

8. As regards the first head of the statement—Constitutional Development—nothing had so far been done, and it was in this connexion that they asked for a small advance (call it concession if you like) on the white paper policy. They asked that the transition should start from the top, as it had in Iraq, and not at the bottom, and that it start within, say, eighteen months (a period once mentioned by Mr. MacDonald). He pointed out that against this concession in a matter of method and not of substance, the Arabs were offering the Jewish interests of Palestine a most valuable concession in the abolition of internal customs barriers; it was they who stood to gain most from this step.

9. By starting at the top he meant, of course, the choice of the head of the State, the formation of a Council of Ministers, and the drafting of a Constitution. He recalled that in Iraq a similar façade of independence had been set up in 1921, but for several years in the ministries the "advisers" were, in fact, the permanent heads, British officials continued in charge of many technical departments, and the High Commissioner was the chief executive authority retaining a right of veto over the decision of the Council of Ministers; there was a gradual relaxation from about 1928, but it was only about 1930 that they began to walk alone as the date fixed for complete emancipation, eleven years after the enthronement of Feisal, approached. In the meantime, great progress would be made with the development of local and municipal administration with a considerable degree of autonomy, as they had frequently proposed.

10. As regards the throne of Palestine (he seemed to assume that there would be a monarchy), the choice of a King should be left to a free plebiscite. As the only candidates would presumably be scions of the houses of Hashim and Saud, representatives of Iraq and Saudiya would appropriately be included in the body supervising the plebiscite. While the Iraqi Government did not press the Hashimite claim, he personally felt little doubt that a Hashimite, and the Amir Abdull'illah, present Regent of Iraq, would get a 90 per cent. majority. He thought the Amir Abdullah had little chance, but that would not prevent his continuing, as at present, ruler of Transjordan within the Federation.

11. Nuri Pasha mentioned in passing that if such a policy could be agreed upon and set in motion they might even make a gesture of solidarity by sending a division to the Senussi front "under the command of Salahuddin Sabbagh"; this would keep the army busy and so simplify the internal situation.

12. All the above makes a clear, coherent and not improbable picture of the general scheme now passing through the minds of the Iraqi politicians, as focussed through the practised and practical eye of Nuri Pasha.

(B)

13. On the 28th July I had a conversation with Rashid Ali Beg. Unfortunately, I was obliged to go straight on to a conference elsewhere, for which I was late, and I was in consequence unable to make immediately a note of what passed, but the principal points were the following :—

14. As regards Syria, from now on he and his colleagues recognised that they must hold His Majesty's Government "excused." They felt aggrieved that in the days of the alliance influence had not been brought to bear on the French to secure ratification of the 1936 treaty and the progressive emancipation of Syria; but the bus had been missed and they knew that we could no longer influence the Vichy Government. (Mezahim Beg Pachachi, Iraqi Minister in France, telegraphed some weeks ago that the French could do nothing about Syria without German and Italian approval. It is perhaps worth noting in this connexion that Rashid Beg did not seem to expect that the Germans would make any liberal declaration about Syria; he thought they had designs which precluded this.)

15. As regards Palestine, they would ask for a declaration that a Government would be set up in a few months. He did not dot the i's and cross the t's as Nuri Pasha had done. He spoke, as though regretfully, of the apparently anti-British campaign that flared up from time to time in the press as the result of the failure to settle the Palestine question; a little reasonableness and we would have the whole Arab world behind us. He added that later that morning he, Nuri Pasha and Taha Pasha were going to meet the Mufti and other members of the Higher Arab Committee with a view to co-ordinating their views.

16. Rashid Ali Beg expressed grave suspicions regarding the activities of Saudiya. They were the only Arab State in a position to establish diplomatic contacts with the Axis Powers. Fuad Hamza, as they knew from Mezahim Beg's reports from Vichy, was coming and going between Vichy and Paris and had been accompanied by the Syrian Sheikh Taj.

(C)

17. (At this stage I recall in parenthesis that one day in June or early in July Rashid Ali Beg informed me that Mezahim Beg had telegraphed from the defeatist climate of Vichy strongly advising his Government to establish contacts and reinsure with Germany and Italy.)

18. On the 24th July I was informed by a prominent personage not in office that Tahsin Beg-al-Askari, who was appointed to the Iraqi Legation in Cairo only the other day, had come back to Bagdad on a mission from Ali Maher, Abder Rahman Azzam and Allubi, advocating a pan-Arab conference with a view to entering into relations with Germany and Italy; to this end it was proposed to appoint Iraqi consuls to convenient posts to act as channels of communication; the names of Musa Shabandar and Ali Haidar were mentioned in this connexion; the idea, he said, had been first suggested by a telegram from Mezahim Pachachi at Vichy.

19. For some days past the Iraqi press, under instructions from the Directorate of Propaganda, has been conducting a strong campaign in favour of the holding of an Arab conference.

20. I understand that reports have been received from Egypt that the mission of Tahsin-al-Askari is to suggest that the Arab States should agree to grant recognition unilaterally to a Syrian Government. (Presumably it would be in Syria if the French mandatory authority recognised it, and "in exile" if they did not.)

21. It is a curious circumstance that neither Rashid Ali Beg nor Nuri Pasha (both of whom are accustomed to speak to me very frankly) has mentioned Tahsin's mission. The emissary himself has been equally oyster-like.

(D)

22. The statement that Tahsin Beg's mission is connected with the calling of some kind of conference, and the Iraqi press campaign, are consistent alike with Nuri Pasha's picture (see especially paragraphs 2, 5 and 9). It is equally consistent with the story of my unofficial friend (paragraph 19) and the story from Egypt (paragraph 19), but these two objects would seem to require a rather more furtive gathering than that suggested by the press campaign. On the other hand, the curious reticence about the mission (paragraph 10) and Nuri Pasha's explanation of the press campaign (paragraph 4) suggest that something furtive may be afoot.

23. The statement of Rashid Ali Beg about their "holding His Majesty's Government excused in regard to the future" in regard to Syria would be consistent with the Egyptian story of a contemplated unilateral act in respect of Syria (paragraph 19); it is equally consistent with Nuri Pasha's account of the plan to get on with the Confederation under the auspices of Great Britain without waiting for Syria (paragraphs 2 and 5); and even with the story of my unofficial informant that it is intended to enter into direct contacts with Germany and Italy (paragraph 18).

24. The fact that this last-named impression linked up his version of Tahsin's mission with the telegram from Mezahim, which we know, in fact, did come (paragraph 18) gives it a certain verisimilitude.

25. On the whole the picture given me by Nuri seems to accord best with all the indications that have so far transpired. But whereas Nuri probably has the picture well focussed, the image before the eyes of Rashid Ali and Taha is likely to be blurred.

July 31, 1940.

[E 2837/2837/65] No. 400.

Declaration made by German Government on October 21, 1940, *concerning Arab Policy of the Axis Powers.*

GERMANY has always sympathised with the Arab question and hoped that the Arabs will one day regain their position in the world which will honour their race and their great history. The German Government has followed with interest the struggle for independence in the Arab countries. In that struggle the Arabs can rely unhesitatingly on the entire German sympathy. In this declaration Germany is in full accord with her ally Italy.